

Tell
Us
Another

Frederick D. Ross, S.D.S./11





“Tell Us Another!”

Stories That Never Grow Old

— BY —

WINFRID HERBST, S. D. S.



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Dedicated
to
All Whose Sublime
Calling It is to Mould
The Plastic Hearts of Youth
After the Heart of Jesus
The Savior of the
World.



Preface

I WAS in a schoolroom in which I had before told many a simple story. Asked by eager boys and girls to "tell another", I replied, "What shall it be? I have already told so many." "Oh," they exclaimed, "tell them over again. We could listen forever!" That was high praise—too high. But the thought contained in that remark gives the reason for this little book's bold venture into existence. It is just a book of stories told over again—for the most part. Some few, indeed, are original in every way. All, of course, are original as regards the way of telling. And they are told in language that cannot but prove helpful to the careful reader.

They are goodness stories. They whisper to the heart of virtuous conduct, of kindliness, of fair example. That is what they are sent out for: to "tell another" and yet "another" to those hearts that are so open to every good suggestion—the hearts of our dear boys and girls.

May God bless the readers!

THE AUTHOR.

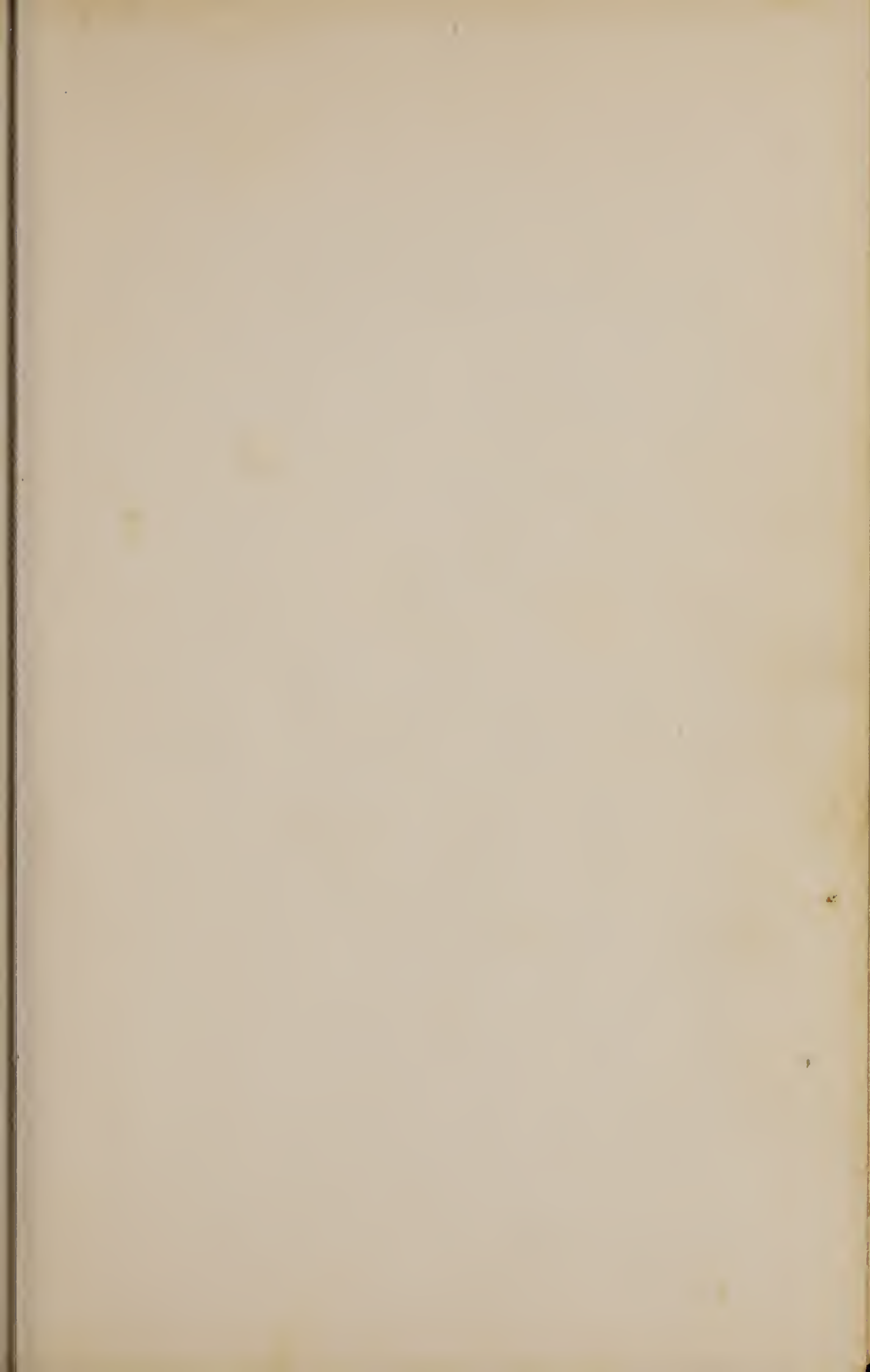
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1925

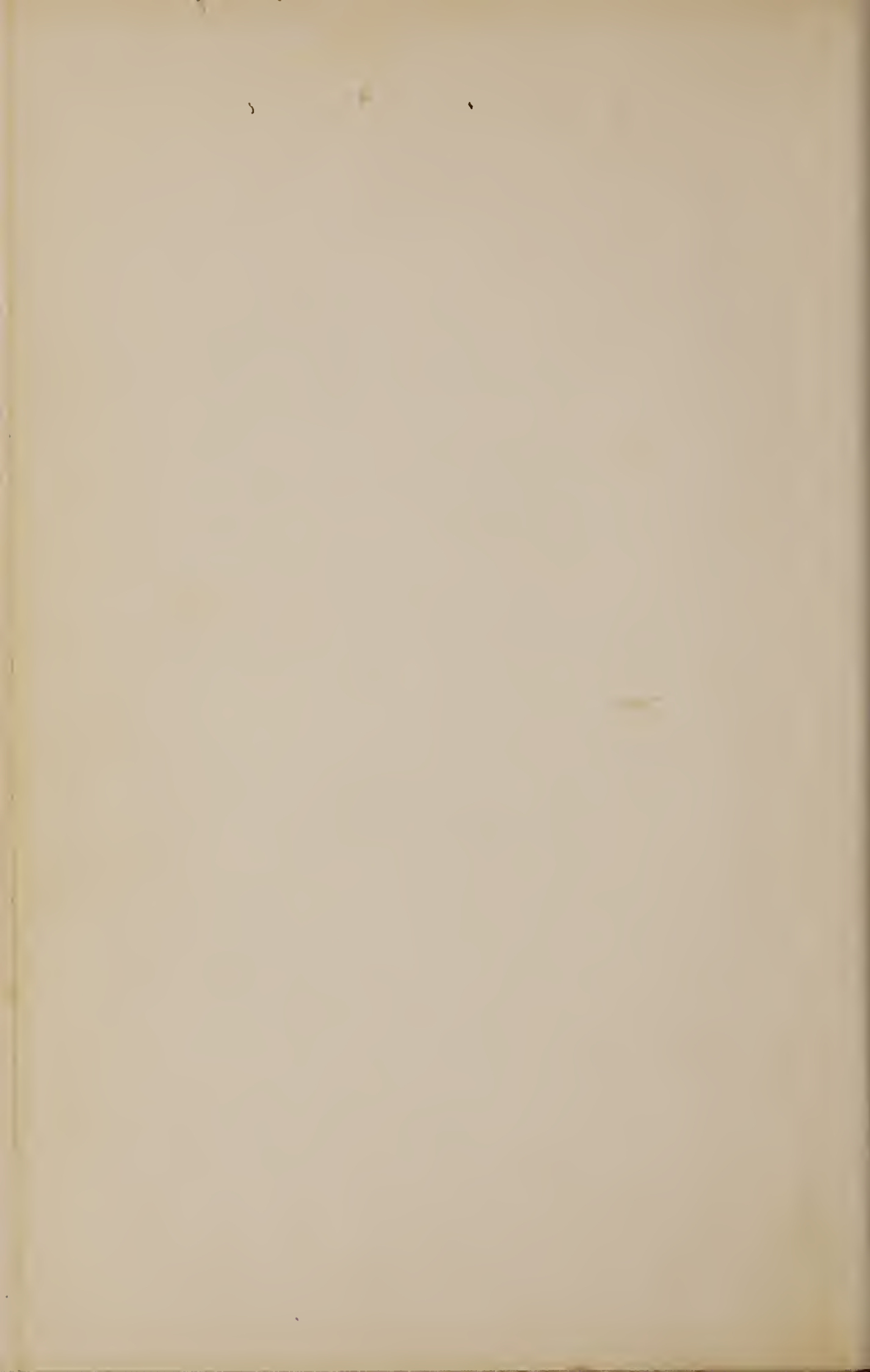


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“Tell Us Another”

Marie's Rosary

I.

THE lovely stars of early night were all a-twinkling in a glorious May sky. Marie Lesly, kneeling at the window of her little room, gazed rapturously upon the delightful scene. Down below was the blooming garden with its fragrant trees mirrored in the stone-encircled pond. Further on a leafy grove threw somber shadows, as the moon, big and nearly full, peeped slowly over the tree-tops, gushing out a flood of silver light. Marie was praying. 'Twas her evening prayer. But now, because it was May, a decade of the rosary was lovingly added. How easy it was to pray to nature's God with nature all a-smiling before her! Arising, she kissed the cross of the neat little mother-of-pearl rosary in her hand. “My First Communion Rosary,” she murmured softly as she unconsciously dropped it upon the sill and cast a last look at the starry heavens above. “Queen of May, O pray for me!”

“Mother dear,” cried Marie, upon entering the kitchen early the next morning, “did you take my

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rosary away? I can not find it anywhere, and only last night I had it in my room."

No, mother had not taken it, nor had she seen it anywhere. "Perhaps Eddie has it," she suggested.

In a moment Marie had found her brother. "Now, don't you begin to tease again, Eddie, but tell me where you hid it—my First Communion Rosary."

"Really, Marie, honest now, I didn't take it. I didn't even see it," said Eddie. "You'll soon find it somewhere, I'm sure. Don't worry." And for once Eddie looked so very innocent and sincere that Marie could not but believe him.

But search as they would, it could not be found. Turning everything topsy-turvy—to mother's great discomfort—they explored the entire house and even the lawn around it. It was in vain. At last they gave up, but not to fret and complain. Oh, no; Marie was too truly a little lady for that. Beckoning Eddie, she whispered mysteriously into his ear: "Come up to my room with me. I have a wonderful plan."

Up they went. Eddie's curiosity was wide-awake. What was about to happen? Closing the door quietly, Marie said with a bright smile: "Eddie, let's pray to Mother Mary, asking her in some way to bring my rosary back to me. The fifth joyful mystery, The Finding of Jesus in the Temple, is the best."

Kneeling in simple faith, gazing fervently upon a picture of our Blessed Lady which hung over Marie's little white bed, and using Eddie's rosary, they trustfully prayed, "Hail, Mary, full of grace....." Ten times their sweet little voices chimed out the beautiful prayer. Then they arose, joyful, confident. "'Twill surely, surely come back," maintained Marie. "Our Lady's help is never asked in vain. 'Remember, O gracious Virgin Mary!' Now we'll wait. I'll get another rosary from Sister for the time." And away they went for a game before school.

II.

October days, the sweetest of the year, had come.

Marie's Rosary

Clad in autumn's many-colored garb, the woods presented a beautiful sight. In the fields yellow pumpkins shone amid rugged shocks of golden-eared corn. All nature was aglow with the russet and gold of Indian summer days. 'Twas Mary's month again: the month of the Holy Rosary.

"Eddie," said Marie, as they sported about in the frost-painted grove, "it's the first of October. I'm sure my rosary *must* come back soon. It *simply must*! Doesn't the *Memorare* say: 'never was it known'?" Marie was ever thinking of her rosary still. She was waiting patiently, trustingly.

"Perhaps," Eddie ventured to say, "you'll never find it."

"There's no perhaps to it," replied Marie with sweet sauciness, "it's sure!" And laughing lightly, she added: "Let's pick a museum of leaves, all colors and sizes and shapes."

This they at once proceeded to do. Suddenly Marie called excitedly: "Eddie, Eddie! come here. There's a lone robin's nest high up in this tree. And see! there is something shiny in it, something bright; maybe it's a jewel."

Eddie peeped through the brownish leaves. "Sure enough!" he burst out. "I'll have it down in a jiffy. What if it's a real gem," he added, his eyes glistening with excitement.

With squirrel-like agility he climbed the tree. "Now I have it," he cried, standing on a long branch and reaching out for the nest. "Catch it, Marie! Down it comes!"

Down it came, falling on the velvet grass at Marie's feet. As she stooped to pick it up an exclamation of surprise and joy escaped her lips. Then kneeling beside it she breathed a grateful prayer: "O thanks, my darling Mother, Queen of the Holy Rosary!"

For there, neatly interwoven in the robin's nest, completely encircling the inner side, was a string of pearls—Marie's First Communion Rosary.

Bernard's Thanksgiving Day

“**B**ERNARD, I wouldn't advise you to risk it today. The lake is frozen over, that's true. It may hold you along the shore, but further out it's mighty thin and you might go through. 'Twere better to stay away. I don't trust this rubber ice, not I!”

Thus spoke Farmer Williams to his son. It was the twenty-fifth of November, cold and frosty. The preceding night had been bitterly cold, and everything now lay clasped in winter's chill embrace. The nearby lake presented miles and miles of dull white and blue. It was a frozen mass—so it seemed from a distance. Bernard Williams had been sharpening skates and making a great fuss generally, in looking for straps and such like things.

But now his father had spoken. It was like pouring cold water over a hot stove. So quickly did his enthusiasm cool off.

In the kitchen some moments later he told Annie all about it. “He didn't forbid it,” he added, after telling of his father's admonition. “He merely said: ‘I wouldn't advise it.’ And so I'm going anyway. After our magnificent dinner at grandmother's, I'll just skip down to the lake and cut some figure-eights.”

“You're surely a goose, if you do,” said Annie with sisterly bluntness.

“Oh, you are a goose, too,” rejoined Bernard, half angrily.

“Then we are both geese and we are certain to get ourselves eaten at grandmother's Thanksgiving dinner,” laughed Annie, good naturedly.

She said no more; for what can a sister do with a big, headstrong brother?

* * * * *

'Twas two o'clock in the afternoon. Bernard Wil-

Bernard's Thanksgiving Day

liams sitting on an old log behind a clump of willow bushes on the lake shore, was putting on his skates. The ice was splendid—smooth as glass and just as transparent. “Oh, how fine!” exclaimed Bernard, as he arose and made a number of fancy cuts and twenty-foot strokes. “Now for some fun—miles of it! Out you go, Bennie!”

The ice *was* thin, he noticed. How it sometimes cracked! How “rubbery” it seemed to be at places! “Where it sags it never breaks,” cried Bernard as he sailed along.

All unconsciously he had gone out further and further. Then as he turned to look back he uttered a cry of surprise. There was the shore, fully a mile away. He looked through the clear ice. Dark and deep was the water below. And how very thin the ice seemed to be! 'Twas only an inch thick—he could tell it from the air bubbles. The vast expanse of ice was everywhere cracking. There were the sharp, plunging cracks and the dull booms, as is always the case on a cold, sunny day.

As he stood gazing at the shore there was a sharp, running sound, and he saw a little streak of water glimmering between him and the land. “It’s a crack!” he exclaimed. “Can I cross it? And if not . . . ?” With startling vividness his father’s words come to him: “Bernard, I wouldn’t advise it.” “Bernard—” how full of love and fatherly care that one word had been!

R-r-r-r-r! r-r-r-r-r! “I wouldn’t advise it. I wouldn’t advise it.” So the strokes grated on his ears as he glided towards the shore. He had reached the crack. 'Twas two inches wide, he noted. The water bubbling over, covered the ice three feet on either side. As he neared the crack the ice sagged. He started back aghast. His heart pounded in his ears. “I wouldn’t advise it. I wouldn’t advise it.” He swallowed hard. An awful feeling of fear gripped him. “I’m lost if I go through!” he exclaimed trembling. “Dear God, I’ll never disobey again. Guardian Angel, O help me!”

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He looked about for help. No one was in sight. And how could anyone have helped him out there on the thin ice.

"I must try a quick slide," he muttered weakly as he went back for a start.. "Guardian Angel, help me now!." He was crossing—but he felt himself sinking slowly, slowly. Then his right skate caught the opposite edge of the cracked ice and he fell. In went his right foot. Already the icy water was up to his knee, and still he felt himself sinking, sinking. 'Twas an awful moment. "Angel Guardian," he cried, "help, oh help me!" At that moment new strength seemed to be given him. Pulling himself up as best he could, he made a last desperate effort and threw himself forward. And—"God be praised!" he cried chokingly, as he slipped out upon the smooth ice, "I'm safe."

Ten minutes later he was on shore, removing his skates with trembling hands.

* * * *

Bernard is a man now. Since that eventful Thanksgiving Day, 1906, he has ever valued his father's advice. Time and again has he said: "My Guardian Angel saved me then."

Florence's Christmas

VES, there's happiness in goodness, if there's happiness anywhere. Within the hidden sweetness of a good deed there lurks a joy—not, indeed, of earth, but of heaven. God, infinitely good, is also infinitely happy. Oh, for an unceasing round of little deeds of kindness and little words of love!

All this Florence Cimmon experienced of a beautiful Christmas morning. "Merry Christmas!" was on the lips of all. The densely-filled cars bore it along, the hurrying crowds scattered it with profuse cheerfulness. "Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas!" Florence stood at the parlor window of her neat little home on Hancock Street and gazed upon the scene of Yuletide merriment. She was all dressed and ready for church—St. John's was only six blocks away. How very happy she seemed to be! Surely, it was because of Mass, Communion and the Crib—for what is like a Christmas Mass, what like Christmas Communion with its blissful thanksgiving before the Omnipotent Babe of the Crib? Or were her thoughts happily occupied with Christmas gifts, with sweets and goodies, all encircling a fragrant tree? Oh, no. In years gone by they, too, had seemingly helped to make her joy more full, but today Florence had neither gifts nor tree. She had them not because she loved Christ's poor.

"Mother," she had said three days before, "Sister Mary told us today of Jesus' poor, of those little ones who will have naught for Christmas. Many, she said, will have a lone and dreary Christmas, no presents, no sweets, no Christmas dinner, not even Christmas joys. To give to such as these, she told us, would be to place a gift into the very hands of the smiling Christ-Child. Mother dear, please, oh please, pack all my gifts, my sweets away—distribute them among the poor mothers

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of Harcot's Lane. The boys and girls, you know, are all awaiting the Christ-Child's coming. How happy they will then be—how bitterly disappointed otherwise! Mother, I want nothing—I want only Jesus and His love—I want to give something to Jesus. Come now, mother, won't you, dear?"

How very pleased her mother had been! "But, Florence, would you really like it? Would you be truly happy?"

"Oh, yes," she had answered, "I cannot otherwise be happy. In the Crib little Jesus stretches out His baby hands to me. Can I say no to Him? Oh, I cannot, I may not, nor do I wish to do so. Never fear, I'll be happy, mother; I'll get more than the whole world with all its holy Christmas joys: Jesus in Holy Communion."

And so it was Christmas morning, and Florence was without the usual books and parcels and goodies, without a Christmas tree. It seemed strange indeed; yet still more strange was the peculiarly happy sensation which gently thrilled her through and through. She was more light-hearted and cheery than she had ever been before. 'Twas happiness in goodness—only this she knew.

And in St. John's the Mass was—oh, so wonderful! Father Hubert's voice trembled with holy emotion at the angelic "*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*" How the organ pealed in accompaniment to a mighty volume of stirring song! And then her Communion—never had it been so full of rapturous sweetness, never had Jesus spoken so tenderly to her loving heart. He seemed to come to her as a little child, to kiss her with soft baby lips, to cling to her confidingly with His tiny arms.

After Mass she knelt long and devoutly before the Crib, almost hidden as it was in a miniature evergreen grove. Her heart was well-nigh bursting with gratitude. "My Infant Savior, sweetest, gentlest Jesus," she whispered softly, "I've never been so happy before. Oh, how can I ever thank you. Dear Christ-Child, I have all my Christmas gifts in you."

Florence's Christmas

Still a-burning with love and full of happiness found in goodness, Florence returned home about thirty minutes later. What was her surprise to find nearly all the boys and girls of Harcot's Lane awaiting her. "Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas!" Again and again, amid the ringing of joyous laughter, the hearty greetings were exchanged. A Christmas tree all ablaze with lights and aglimmer with tinsel stood in the center of the parlor. Ruddy apples and yellow oranges glowed among the odorous branches of green. And what a heap of bags and bundles, of books and games and what not there was at the bottom! Florence was amazed.

She looked at the smiling faces of her happy young friends, knowing not whether to laugh or to cry—to cry out of sheer joy. But just then her mother and Uncle John entered the room—wealthy Uncle John, the Broadway banker. He smiled at Florence's surprise and bewilderment. Then turning to her mother, he said: "Tell her all about it, Mary."

"My dearest Florence," said her mother, and she accompanied these words with a kiss, "on Christmas Eve I told Uncle John of your wish to give all your gifts to the children of Harcot's Lane. Now, you know, Uncle John loves both the poor and the lovers of the poor. So he played the part of the bountiful Christ-Child in their regard. He made this Christmas one which will ever be remembered by your young friends here as the very happiest of their lives. Yes, he simply heaped the choicest of gifts and the most useful of presents upon them. More than this, he bade them bring this beautiful tree and all these pretty things to you. Now, dressed in their best, they have come to make your Christmas the happiest of the happy, the merriest of the merry. Florence dear, there's truly happiness in goodness, isn't there?"

"So, my dear children," she added, addressing the shining faces round her, "laugh and chat and sing and feast all day long. Now for a Christmas break-

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fast, then for a Christmas dinner! 'Peace on earth to men of good will'—peace and joy."

"You see, Florence," said Uncle John with one of his big, hearty smiles, "the Child Jesus has already given back all that you gave Him, hasn't He?"

"Oh, a thousand times more," murmured Florence. She was thinking of the joy of giving. Wasn't it greater than the joy of receiving—although that, too, was very great?

A Beautiful Legend Retold

WILL you listen to a little story, to a beautiful legend? It takes but a moment to tell it. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, were expelled from the wonderful garden of Paradise, they roamed sadly about. All around them there were but thorns and thistles and the bare and cheerless earth. Filled with grief, they tearfully exclaimed: "Oh that the angel who stands at the gate of Paradise had, with his flaming sword, put an end to our existence!" And they wept.

But now they seemed again to see Paradise and to hear gentle breezes rustling amid the beauteous leaves of its shady trees. They thought to hear again the happy ripple of its laughing brooks. Then it was that a pure white, rose-tinged cloud appeared to them. From it a sweet voice spoke, saying: "Weep not! For I will always be with you. I will make smooth your path, lighten your labor, make your darkness bright. When you till the earth by the sweat of your brow, I will show you in the distance refreshing shades and waving fields—I will show you Paradise."

"But will you also help us when we come to die?" asked the weeping couple of the little voice in the milky cloud. "Ah, yes," came the response in musical tones, "I will also then be with you. Then, too, will I disclose Paradise to you—nay, more, I will lead you back to it."

In joy and wonder the exiles then exclaimed: "Oh, who are you that make us thus happy?" "I," came in accents low, "am Hope, the daughter of Faith and Charity." Then the cloud melted away in the soft summer air. But Hope dwelt with them ever after, and our first parents were as happy as in their exile they could be. And Hope dwells with us, their children, too, making our lives all bright and happy.

Grandfather's Warning

THE WEATHER had been bitterly cold, and then had softened somewhat. Afterwards, for three whole days, the snow had gently fallen.

The falling flakes, though gentle, had yet kept Rob and Bessie in the house and in their room. 'Twas a bright winter morning when the jolly sun once more peeped smilingly over the eastern horizon. Rob, looking out of the window, saw a pure white carpet of snow, sparkling and glittering as far as the eye could reach. Now he would have some fun, he thought. Yes, he knew what he would do. He would hurry out, quickly make a snow-man in the garden below, and spring a pleasant surprise on Bessie.

'Twas a great idea. In a twinkling he was down in the garden. One big ball of snow was soon rolled up. This was the base. Another equally large was placed upon it. And so in a short time the body was finished. But the head was still wanting. Hurrying to a sunny spot where the snow was soft, Rob shaped a head and neatly attached it to the snow-man's broad shoulders. But arms were also lacking. Luckily he found two sufficiently long pieces of laths. These he fastened in the snowy sides. He must hurry, else Bessie would see him before he was finished. Then all would be spoilt. Eyes were yet wanting, and a nose and a mouth. Only a few seconds and he had brought charcoal from the kitchen and—there stood Mr. Snow-man in all his glory, a masterpiece of boyish skill.

Away he went to get Bessie. Wouldn't she be delighted?

But while Rob had been working, another had been watching. This was Tom, a neighbor boy. He disliked Rob because the latter, being more diligent, was always ahead of him in class. Now, as soon as Rob had gone, he leaped over the fence and with a few

Grandfather's Warning

blows and kicks and shoves completely destroyed the newly-made snow-man. Then he hid in some nearby bushes and waited. He wanted to see and laugh at Rob's surprise and pain.

Rob hastened back with Bessie. There lay Mr. Snow-man, a shapeless mass. Instinctively he looked around for the author of this deed. There, across the fence, was Tom, laughing and rubbing his hands in his wicked glee. The blood rushed to Rob's head. He would show him! Such meanness! He bent down and picked up a stone. Already about to swing his arm, he paused. Grandfather's warning seemed to ring in his ears: "*You are master of the stone while it remains in your hands; let it fly and you cease to be its master!*" He conquered himself with an effort, turned and went away. Bessie followed, and together they made a second snow-man in another part of the garden.

Tom had expected Rob to throw and to say hard words. That would have pleased him. But, since he did neither, Tom was filled with shame at his own petty baseness. He saw that Rob was a man, and that he himself was mean, a coward, and no man. The next day at school he asked Rob's pardon. They shook hands and became fast friends. And as a result Tom became as model a boy as was Rob. 'Twas all due to grandfather's warning and to Rob's self-control.

St. Anthony Again

“**E**DWARD!” called out Mr. Bryce, president of the flourishing firm of Bryce & Sons, “step over here for a moment, I have an errand for you.”

In a twinkling Edward, the fourteen-year-old office boy, was at his desk, awaiting orders.

“Edward,” continued Mr. Bryce in that kind, grave manner which was characteristic of him and which so greatly endeared him to all his employees, “I have always placed most implicit confidence in you. Nor have I ever been deceived. Your attention to business, your love of duty, your active, evident interest in the Company’s affairs, induce me to look upon you even as upon a promising partner-to-be and feel towards you as a father towards a devoted son. Hence it is that I have no hesitation whatever in sending you on errands such as the one I have in mind now and in entrusting to you packets such as this.”

Here the president handed the expectant boy a bulging pocketbook. “This purse,” he explained, “contains five thousand dollars in bills to be deposited at the First National Bank, Broadway. Deposit them immediately and then give yourself the pleasure of a half day off. It is now 8 o’clock. Report again at 1:30 this afternoon.” And Mr. Bryce smiled in his grave, great-hearted way.

“I thank you, sir,” said Edward as he took the purse and placed it into the inner pocket of his coat, which he then buttoned closely. The praise which he had just received and the unusual mark of confidence which his employer had just shown him made him blush for joy. “I hope you will never have reason, sir, to regret placing such trust in me.”

With these words he respectfully left the room and hurried on his way to the First National Bank. It was the first of April and a delightful day. Edward drew

St. Anthony Again

deep breaths of the invigorating morning air as he strode along through the crowded streets. So he was free, was his own master for half a day! What should he do, anyway? He thought of this and that and many things. But he finally decided to skip out for a brief visit to the zoological gardens to see how those dandy polar bears were relishing the warm April sunshine. He liked to see them plunge into the large tanks of water which were built to represent holes in the ice of the Arctic regions. Then he would spend a few hours at home helping mother—he so rarely got a chance. But the crowded streets disturbed his happy making of plans; so he turned down a quiet alley. This both enabled him to avoid the constant jostling and somewhat shortened the distance to the First National.

It was 8:30 o'clock when he arrived at the bank, a magnificent structure of granite and marble. As he ascended the steps to enter, he placed his hand into his pocket to draw out the precious purse and—found the pocket empty!

Poor Edward staggered and turned pale. The purse was gone! "What will Mr. Bryce say?" he gasped inaudibly. But only for a moment was he stunned by the greatness of the loss and all it meant to him. He quickly recovered himself and, manly as he was, did some ideal manly thinking. "I must have lost it somehow and somewhere," he reflected. "But how and, what counts most now, where? It could not have been stolen with my coat buttoned up tight all round like this. And I suppose there's no hope of finding it now. No hope? Well, there's St. Anthony. He always helps when lost things are to be found. Why, I passed St. Anthony's on the way! I'll just go back, kneel before his altar in the church and pray. Then I'll walk back the way I came. St. Anthony will help me find the pocketbook, I'm sure."

Such was Edward's reasoning. It was not very deep, but it was full of faith. He did not consider that the streets were crowded and that not even for a minute

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could such a large purse lie anywhere unperceived. Of course, there was the alley; but groups of children were playing in it always. However, these were no considerations for Edward. "I'll pray; he'll do the rest." That was his logic.

In the quietness of the church he knelt before the beautiful altar of St. Anthony—that saint so justly popular because so sweetly helpful. For fully ten minutes his boyish heart poured out its simple prayers for aid. "Dear St. Anthony, mother says you always help. Oh, don't you see I'm in great trouble now? I've lost a valuable purse. Oh, you must help me find it. Else I'll not know what to do. Oh, you simply *must help*, St. Anthony; dear St. Anthony, you simply *must!*" Such was the burden of his prayer, such its oft-recurring refrain.

Then, full of confidence, he retraced his steps, looking about him carefully, yet not at all anxiously. St. Anthony would help—that was settled. Nor did his trust wane as block after block was left behind and no sign of the purse was seen. When he came to the alley, he noticed, in an abstracted way, that a group of boys at the farther end were evidently having great fun about something. As he drew nearer he observed that they were kicking a dark object about in high glee. "April fool!" the boys were shouting. "You can't fool us! April fool! You can't catch us with a fat pocketbook!" And with that they continued to kick the offending purse about the street.

As Edward approached, one of the lads kicked the purse toward him so that it fell at his very feet. Tauntingly he cried out, "Get rich quick, guy! Put it into your pocket!"

"It's my purse, the lost purse!" exclaimed Edward in an undertone, with a thrill of joy. A confused wave of thought surged through his mind about the wonderful way in which saints—and especially one—do help. He stooped quickly, picked up the purse and placed it into his pocket again, making sure this time that it was really and securely there.

St. Anthony Again

"April fool, go to school! Tell your teacher you're a fool! April fool!" shouted the boys, wild with delight.

But Edward, rapidly walking away towards the First National Bank, did not hear. There was something else in his heart. It was one big, glad hymn of thanks.

Something Worse Than Cannon Balls!

IN THE good old days when France was still a truly Catholic country, the garrison stationed at a certain fortress was ordered to take part in the Corpus Christi procession.

As the time for the procession drew near, dark clouds obscured the sky. To all appearances there was to be a heavy rain. The officers grumbled and could not conceal their disinclination to walk in the procession that day.

How strange that they should have acted thus! It was the oddest thoughtlessness. Then the commandant said:

"Gentlemen, I'm sure that not even a shower of cannon balls would deter you from going out to encounter the enemy. For you are pledged to the King's service and would deem it cowardly, nay, traitorous, to disobey orders to march. Will you now let, not cannon balls, but a few drops of rain keep you from rendering slight service to the King of Kings?"

The words worked like magic. Every officer went—and was proud to go.

How strange that little things should so easily keep us from the service of Jesus!

Let's remember that He is our King. Let's never fear sacrifices when marching along under the standard of Christ.

Jesus!

“**I** CANNOT EAT.”

Such a piteous announcement the priest had not heard for many a day. But we must now see whence it came and why.

In the great city of Munich, famed for its rare works of art, there lived not so very long ago a poor boy named Willie. He had lost his father years before and was now, at the tender age of nine, almost alone in the world. True, his mother was still living, but she was a washerwoman that had to work hard to make both ends meet and, sad to say, had grown careless and coarse, unsympathetic and unloving amid life's dreary battles. She shamefully neglected her own boy, making him feel by her very indifference and disregard more miserable and lonely than he would have felt had he had no mother at all. The poor lad grew paler and paler. He began to waste away. Finally he became so weak that he was obliged with ever greater frequency to absent himself from school.

Now, his parish priest (a priest with a priest's heart of gold) noticed this absence, and one day paid a visit to the little fellow's shabby home. There he lay all alone in a bare, comfortless room upon a hard cot, emaciated, exhausted. When he saw the priest enter he instinctively drew back, fearing lest he be reproved for his failure to appear at school. But when the priest sat down beside his bed and spoke to him with fatherly gentleness, his fear passed away and a happy, trusting look came into his innocent blue eyes. And it was when the Father pulled a large, beautiful orange from his pocket and offered it to him that the boy said pathetically in a broken, trembling voice, while his looks showed forth the thanks with which his heart was full:

“I cannot eat.”

Much surprised, the priest looked into the boy's

Jesus!

mouth. What a sickening sight! The tongue was badly swollen and was of an awful brown and red putrefying color. That was a bad case indeed.

The priest arose. He had formed a resolution. That same day Willie was taken to a hospital. There, lying in a bed of spotless white, he listened during the whole quiet afternoon to the gentle voice of an angelic Sister as she told him about the dear Christ Child born at Bethlehem, about the death which His love for us had prompted that same Child to endure once He had become a Man, about His abiding presence in our midst as Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. How happy it made Willie! His simple heart burned with love towards a God so good.

That same evening the saintly priest came again. For a long time his soft, persuasive voice was heard at the bedside. Then the boy was heard to whisper something that only the Father could hear. Willie had been prepared therefor and had made his first confession with singular fervor and piety. Was it going to be his last?

And the next morning, lying upon his little cot, he received Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. It was his First Communion. He received it like an angel.

Two hours later Willie, still absorbed in tranquil thanksgiving, was carried down to the operation room. There the surgeon in charge approached him and gently said, "My dear boy, we must perform this operation in order to save you; we must cut away the diseased portion of your tongue. It will not hurt you because when we cut it you will be asleep. But afterwards you will never be able to speak again.. So if you have anything that you would still like to say, say it now."

Piously folding his hands upon the breast into which his Eucharistic Savior had come but a short time before, Willie opened his lips.

And like heaven's own music there fell upon the hallowed air the word—"Jesus!"

The Power of Prayer

“**A**H, FATHER HERBERT, there’s nothing to it—this talk, I mean, of the children’s prayer saving the day. It rained yesterday; it’s raining today; and ’twill rain tomorrow and Saturday, too. Prayer may be fine in a way; it may be excellent in its own place, but do you really think it will put those clouds to flight? Do you seriously mean to say that we’ll have fair weather because the boys and girls are praying for it? I, for one, am mighty doubtful.”

Edward Winson was speaking. Of all the members of Father Herbert’s parish he was the wealthiest and, in a way, the most influential. But he was by no means the most exemplary Catholic; indeed, he was far removed from the list even of those we call practical. Lukewarm and somewhat cynical, possessed of strong and uncommendable characteristics, a man who in his religious life did just his duty and no more, Edward Winson, though he knew it not, was in danger of joining the mighty, ever swelling army of twentieth-century indifferentists. For as surely as carelessness leads to lukewarmness, so surely does lukewarmness lead to indifference, that most lamentable of all states. For who is more incurable than he that has no desire to be cured? But God was about to show him mercy. “A little child shall lead them.”

Only a few weeks ago the zealous and untiring Father Herbert had solicited Mr. Winson’s aid and active participation in the coming bazaar that was to lighten the burden of debt weighing so heavily on his little church. He had, to be sure, approached his stern, somewhat caustic parishioner with no little trepidation. But to his great surprise and joy that worthy had offered his services with altogether unwonted alacrity and affability. He had assured the delighted priest that both purse and goods as well as his own personal

The Power of Prayer

assistance were at his disposal at any time. In the days that followed almost all the preparations had been made. Even the booths had been erected in the grove belonging to the schoolgrounds. But then, to the bitter disappointment of all, it had begun to rain. That was Wednesday—Saturday, the first of May, was to witness the long-expected event. This was Thursday—and oh what a downpour! Was it really never going to stop? Yesterday Father Herbert had said to the children, in his own simple way, “My dearest little friends, it’s all up to you. You must pray that it stop raining before Saturday. This is Wednesday, St. Joseph’s day. Go to Joseph: he always helps. Storm his fatherly heart.” Of course, the children had forthwith become enthusiastic. They were all piety, all smiles, and all confidence, too. “Don’t you worry, Father,” they cried. “We’ll have fine weather; you’ll see. Oh, we’ll have fine weather for Saturday.” And with that they straightway began a tridium in St. Joseph’s honor, Sister Modesta at the head, of course.

And now it was Thursday. What a veritable deluge! Mr. Winson, as the head of the committee of affairs, had come to see about the postponement of the bazaar. But with a quiet smile the parish priest had assured him that all would be well, that the matter had been placed into good hands. Then he told about the children’s tridium to St. Joseph. This it was that gave occasion to the remark with which our story opens.

“‘More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of,’ ” said Father Herbert, quoting Tennyson. “Mr. Winson, faith can move mountains, as Holy Writ tells us. I have unbounded confidence in the children’s prayers. I believe they are going to pierce the clouds in very truth, and scatter them, too.”

That settled it. Willy-nilly Mr. Winson was obliged to postpone the projected postponement. And so he took his departure with the best possible grace, doubtful, to be sure, and wondering much; for heavy clouds in foggy England are rarely anxious to flee away at the bidding of any man, much less, thought he, at the

"Tell Us Another!"

feeble lisplings of a group of boys and girls. But he would see. And Saturday evening he would call and let Father Herbert have his "I told you so!"

Friday morning came, bringing a leaden sky. From out the gloomy heavens the rain came steadily, steadily down. "The children are praying hard," Sister whispered to Father Herbert in school that morning. "They haven't the least doubt about tomorrow; they are sure of the bazaar. They are bringing just heaps of flowers to St. Joseph. And only think of it—about an hour ago the sweet little things came to me and said, 'Sister, if St. Joseph doesn't listen, we're going to turn his picture round to the wall.' What a threat! And what a wondrous faith withal!" And Sister smiled happily.

Saturday morning came, and still it was raining, raining, raining. The great event had been planned for the afternoon. The triduum was at an end: the prayers were apparently unheard. Could it be that Mr. Winson was right after all? Not so thought the children. "We'll have fine weather, Father; you'll see; we'll have fine weather,"—such was still the burden of their song. Were they not a little rash? Was not this a case of hoping against hope? It seemed even presumptuous.

But it was not. About ten o'clock the clouds began to grow ever thinner and thinner; it stopped raining; the jolly May sun peeped down upon the earth and began to kiss away the diamond drops from bud and flower; a warm wind began to blow, putting to even more rapid flight the already retreating denizens of the sky, and gathering up the little pools of water in passing. By two o'clock in the afternoon everything was dry. The grass was invitingly fresh and green. The birds in the grove began to sing their sweetest songs—so sweet that the beauteous flowers which had been sleeping since Wednesday were awakened thereby and opened their little eyes again.

And the people, dressed in their Sunday best, left their homes in crowds and thronged to the bazaar.

The Power of Prayer

Ah, what merry-making there was then! Such a buying and selling and drawing and begging and fining and taxing and what not! Games abounded. There was business-like fun and frolic everywhere. A fair just like it that little parish had never had before. And the children—they were in high glee. Beaming with joy they danced round Father Herbert again and again and ever with the same exultant exclamation, "Oh, we told you so!" Nothing could equal the tender joy that overflowed from the innocent confiding hearts that day. St. Joseph had been true.

It was late at night when the committee, Father Herbert in their midst, assembled in the schoolhouse to determine the result of the afternoon's activities. When they had finished, Edward Winson arose and grasped the priest's hand with a grip as sincere as it was firm. "Father," he exclaimed, "I now believe in prayer. Not only did we have that bazaar, but it was the most successful this parish has seen since its existence. I'm a changed man, Father. I'm going to get down on my knees and do my duty to God from this day forward to the end of my life. I'm going to become a man of prayer."

"Mr. Winson, I am glad—God be praised!" said the priest, deeply moved. "Prayer can indeed do all things. We need only faith. But what is that?" he asked suddenly.

All listened. Upon the tin roof above there was a patter, patter, patter. The men looked at each other in astonishment. It was raining!

How a Little Rose Died



ONCE upon a time in the fair month of June a rosebush grew at the wayside. The rosebuds were already plump and full. Soon they would burst open—some fragrant morning, maybe. But one of them could not wait; it wanted to bloom before the rest. So what did it do but crowd on ahead of the others. And sure enough! one fine morning this little bud was spreading out its petals in the summer sun. Everybody admired it. But alas! it had been in too great a hurry; it was not strong; it had not enough sap. So when the sun became hot the rose grew faint and withered away. Poor little blooming rose! Its head drooped so pitifully! Then, because it had pushed its way so much to the front, it was seen by worms; and they came and gnawed at its heart. Pretty soon the petals of the little rose dropped to the ground and were blown away by the wind. But after a few days the other buds broke open slowly and began to bloom in all their fresh and healthy beauty. Many days they bloomed; and they were the joy of every one that saw them. The little rose that died might have had it just as nice, if it had not been in such a hurry to stop being a modest little bud.

* * * *

I knew another Rose. She was a rosebud in the springtime of life. But she was only one of a number of buds, plump and full of the many things learned, that graduated from school one year. Soon they were to bloom from the rosebud of maidenhood into the rich flower of womanhood. But one of them, Rose, could not wait; she wanted to bloom before the rest. So what did she do but crowd on ahead of the others. She was seen everywhere; no dance was complete unless Rose was there; and she would be gay until the

How a Little Rose Died

wee small hours of the morning. Everybody talked about her; she was so popular. But alas! she had been in too great a hurry. She was too young and weak for such a life. Poor, popular little Rose! She began to droop and fade away. And then the ugly worms of sin came and gnawed at her heart. And pretty soon the petals of her beauty dropped to the ground and were blown away by the wind of time, never to return. And when the other buds, the other girls of her class, had grown to be fair, blooming flowers of maidenly modesty, strong in home-made virtue, poor little Rose seemed old and faded and nobody cared for her any more. She might have had it just as nice as the other girls, if she had not been in such a hurry to stop being a modest little bud.

The Little Jar of Tears

VES; little Rosie had cried herself to sleep that night; and even while she dreamt, an occasional deep sob broke from her unconsciously. 'Twas really too bad that the tiny girlie had always to be weeping.

"Oh," said a soft voice at her side, all of a sudden, "why are you weeping, darling?" Rosie looked up and saw a beautiful angel bending over her. Then she gazed upon the starry heavens, and such a holy desire seized her that she wept tears of longing.

So the angel put his arms about Rosie, and away they flew—up to heaven. In the twinkling of an eye they were there. Of course, they had no difficulty at all with St. Peter; he of the keys let them come in at once.

Now, what do you think Rosie's first question was? Why, just what yours would be, of course, and mine, too. "Can I see God at once?" she asked. "I want to see God."

"Oh, no!" said the angel kindly. "You may not yet see God, sweet and tiny soul. Never could mortal eye look upon Him and live, so great is His beauty and His splendor. No, dear, you must die before you can see God in heaven."

So they merely took a look at an antechamber of that glorious kingdom—went into an entry, so to speak. Its walls were lined with little jars all of the same size.

"These are tear jars," said the angel. "Every tear that a person weeps on earth is collected by his guardian angel and placed in a special jar here in this room."

Little Rosie was becoming curious. She peeped into a number of the jars. Some were almost full; some were almost empty. "Dear angel," said the girlie, "some are almost empty."

The Little Jar of Tears

"It is better so," the angel replied. "The best and happiest lives are often those of the fewest tears, though not always, to be sure. It is sunshine that makes the flowers of virtue grow, though rain must come sometimes, too."

Rosie was still peeping into the jars. At last she found one that was almost full.

"That is your jar," said the angel. "When it is full you must die."

"Oh!" cried the little girl, so frightened that she jumped up—and found herself in her little bed, with the rising sun smiling into her face and kissing away the last vestige of a tear that was hanging there, just as it kisses away a dewdrop from a flower.

But Rosie did not forget the little jar of tears. She thanked her guardian angel for the little lesson and promised God that she would always make herself and others, and especially the loved ones around her, happy by the presence of her smile and the absence of her tears.

A "Prisoner of War"

THEY were playing in the garden—all blooming as it was with the foliage of May. Suddenly Paul, who was ever seeking new adventures, cried out: "Rose, come here! See what I've captured!"

In a moment light-hearted Rose was at his side, her eyes brimful of fun and of eager expectation. "What is it?" she asked breathlessly.

"A May-bug," said Paul. "I caught him as he was sailing gaily from tree to tree. I say, Rose, let's make him our 'prisoner of war'. Rush up to our room and bring one of those little paper boxes. Hurry!"

And away Rose skipped. Soon she was back again, box in hand. "But," she hinted anxiously, "he can't live in here; he must have air and food. Won't he suffer, Paul?"

"No, not in the least," returned Paul confidently. "We'll make some holes in the cover here and place some fresh green grass at the bottom. Then our Mr. May-bug will live like a king in a palace. Now, Rose, you just run to the kitchen and ask mother dear for a sugared tart and a bit of honeycomb. With such dainties our captive will surely be more than delighted with his palace-prison."

Rose hurried away, quite convinced. Although a year older than Paul, she was always ready in all things to acknowledge his superior wisdom. "Of course," she softly assured herself, "Paul cannot be mistaken."

Upon arriving at the kitchen, she told mother the whole story in a breath. And, having taken the delicacies for which she had come, she was hastening away—

"But, Rose," expostulated her mother, "do you think this little creature really finds delight in being a 'prisoner of war'? I'm sure he will miss the air and the

A "Prisoner of War"

birds and the flowers and the grass. And will he not long for the company of his fellow May-bugs and for many other things? Tell Paul to let him go, Rose."

But Rose, in her haste, had not heard these last words. She was out in the garden again with Paul.

The two little enthusiasts then safely confined this "prisoner of war" in what they were pleased to call his palace-prison. Holes at the top, fresh green grass at the bottom, sugared tart and bit of honeycomb,—surely, this would make their May-bug happy.

But now, tired of play, they skipped up to their room, taking their May-bug with them. It was Saturday morning. They had already finished their lessons for Monday—for Paul and Rose were ever diligent in preparing their tasks. There was nothing more to be done. The day was theirs. They could enjoy themselves, oh! ever so much. First they began with games; then came the picture-books. Their "prisoner of war" was entirely forgotten.

So absorbed were they in a large and wonderful picture-book that they did not notice the rapid passage of time. They did not notice that the dinner-hour had passed. They did not even know that someone had quietly entered the room and had as quietly left it again. So very interesting was their book.

Finally Rose looked up. There, upon the table stood a large basket which had not been there before. Where had it come from? What could it contain? "It wasn't here before, Paul," said Rose. "Why," she added, peering into it, "look! it's our dinner."

"Mother wishes us to take our dinner here for some reason, it seems," said Paul. "What can be the matter. And see, Rose, all our favorite dishes are here, too!"

It was customary for the family to dine, during the summer months, in a breezy little tent put up in the shady garden. "How much nicer," said Paul, as he munched the juicy blueberry pie and handed Rose a sugared tart, "how much nicer it would be down there in the beautiful garden. It's so close here; there are

"Tell Us Another!"

no breezes, no birds, no trees—there's nothing lovely here."

"Well," said Rose, "after dinner we'll make up for it. We'll go right down into the garden and play all afternoon. I'm tired of this old room already."

And after they had eaten, they hurried to the door. What was their astonishment when they found it locked! Again and again they rapped and called and called and rapped. But it was in vain. No one seemed to hear them.

"What can it all mean?" exclaimed Paul; and he was dangerously near to crying.

"Oh, I don't know," returned Rose as she burst into tears and began to sob.

Paul joined in, and together they wept aloud. But he, being the wiser, was also the more manly, and soon ceased crying. Then he tried to console Rose. He read a book to her; but poor Rose could not pay attention.

And so the long hours of the afternoon passed slowly away. The two children stood at the window and looked down upon the shady garden. Butterflies were flitting about; flowers were looking up at them; the empty swing was swaying in the breeze; the little carts with which they had intended to play were idle in the shade. "How pleasant it would be down there!" they exclaimed again and again. But it was not to be. They were captives.

The shadows in the garden below had lengthened exceedingly, when they thought to hear a footstep at the door. Immediately they began to rap again. They heard their mother's voice.

"O mother dear, open the door for us," they cried. "Some one has locked us in. All afternoon have we been here," and they began to sob anew.

As soon as their mother had entered the room, they flew into her arms and clung to her as if for life. Into her ears they poured out their tale of woe: their loneliness, what they had missed—

"But," said their mother sweetly, "did I not send

A "Prisoner of War"

you a most excellent dinner, your favorite dishes? And haven't you, my dear children, a nice, airy room here? Haven't you beautiful books and playthings of all kinds? What more can you desire?"

"But we were not free," sobbed Rose. "We could not romp and play. We could not enjoy the green grass, nor the pretty flowers, nor the leafy trees."

"And do you not think," said their mother gently, "that the May-bug, whom you imprisoned, misses all these things, too?"

"Oh, our 'prisoner of war'!" cried Paul and Rose with one voice. "We had forgotten all about him. We'll let him go at once, at once."


They hurried to the May-bug's palace-prison on the window sill. He was humming and buzzing in a most disconsolate manner. They opened the box. There he sat on the grass at the bottom, quite dreary and forlorn. When he saw that freedom was offered him, he spread his wings and gaily flew down—down into the blooming garden. There he joined three fellow May-bugs who were seemingly in wait for him. Together they sported among the foliage with all the liveliness and evident glee of which May-bugs are capable.

As they turned away from the window, Paul gave his mother a boyish embrace, and said: "O mother, I see it all now—you were teaching us a lesson. You wished to show us how hard it is to be deprived of freedom." And he looked ashamed.

"Oh, yes, mother dear," cried Rose, "and we thank you for it. Oh, let us go down into the garden now!" And in her great joy she kissed her mother thrice and again.

"Yes, Paul," said their mother fondly, "you and Rose are right. 'Twas a little lesson I was teaching you—a Saturday lesson. Remember that all God's creatures, however small, feel and suffer. Be kind and gentle to them always. God, you know, made them all."

And Nellie Was Sorry

“PEN your mouth and shut your eyes,” said Nellie to her brother George. Weary of fun and frolic they were resting on the lawn swing one glorious summer’s day. Nellie had skipped into the house on some mysterious errand and had just returned.

George, who was two years older than Nellie, was as jovial and indulgent a lad as one could hope to find anywhere. So now, both to please Nellie and also because he saw something white and sugar-like hidden in her hand, he obediently opened wide his mouth and tightly shut his eyes.

The result was two minutes of unlovely spitting and sputtering; for instead of the lump of sugar which George had expected, he had received a dose of salt.

Strange to say, Nellie enjoyed the scene immensely; she thought it a capital joke. Running into the house again, she soon returned and repeated her request: “Open your mouth and shut your eyes.”

“Ah,” thought George, “she’s sorry, and surely she will now take this bitter taste out of my mouth by giving me something sweet.” So once again he expectantly opened his mouth. Then Nellie placed a piece of charcoal into it and quickly ran away.

George did not say anything, but he thought it very mean of his sister to act thus, and resolved: “I’ll get even with her very soon. Just wait and see.”

Only the next day his chance came. They were out in the garden. Nellie was chasing and trying to capture some beautiful butterflies, while George strolled about, admiring the beautiful flowers and the fresh green plants.

Coming to a cherry tree which was all aglow with the ruddy fruit, he began to pick a hatful; when he was about to leave, he noticed some large, green, prickly gooseberries growing near at hand. “Ha!” he

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said to himself, "here's where I can fool Nellie and pay her back." He then picked a handful and went to find Nellie.

"Open your mouth and shut your eyes," he commanded, when he had found her. Nellie looked suspiciously at her brother and then at the hat. But she couldn't see what George had; for he had placed the gooseberries on the cherries and had covered the whole with some large leaves. So she was somewhat afraid; for she remembered how naughty and unkind she had been the day before. Would George, in revenge, perhaps put a beetle into her mouth or even one of those caterpillars she hated so much?

Still hesitating, she slowly opened her mouth and shut her eyes. George reached into the hat and took out a big, sharp-pointed gooseberry. But, then, seeing Nellie so innocent, so half sorry, half afraid, and hearing, perhaps, the gentle voice of his Guardian Angel, he replaced it and, taking instead a large, juicy cherry, put it into Nellie's mouth. His sister shut her mouth and opened her eyes with wonder and delight. With great satisfaction and pleasure she ate the cherry.

"Open your mouth and shut your eyes," again and again George gave the command, and Nellie (although she soon forgot to close her eyes) partook of the luscious cherries until she had her fill.

George afterward said that never had he felt such exquisite delight, such consoling joy, as he experienced while giving his sister cherries for salt, cherries for charcoal—good for evil.

And Nellie was sorry. She saw what a noble boy her brother was and what an unkind little girl she had been. Humbly she asked his pardon.

"We Don't Talk in Church!"

ALICE was only a girlie. But she was very good. If she hadn't been I wouldn't be writing about her now.

One Sunday she knelt in church during Mass, saying her prayers from her little prayerbook. During the Holy Sacrifice a richly dressed lady came in and sat down at Alice's side. She was not a Catholic, so she did not kneel at all, but just sat and watched what was going on.

Everything that took place at the altar, the priest in his sacred vestments, that altar with its lights, the ceremonies, the altar boys in their cassocks and surplices, was strange to her. She was puzzled. Soon she became so curious that she bent over and whispered to Alice, asking her what it all meant. And now just see what an extra good girl Alice was.

She wanted to be polite. So she took her pencil and wrote on the flyleaf of her prayerbook the words, "Please, we don't talk in church." This she showed to the lady.

Was the lady angry? No; and she did not say another word. But she thought to herself, "This church must be a holy place. It is not like our Protestant churches. There must be something sacred and wonderful about this religion. I'll have to find out more about it."

So she went home and read good books about the Catholic faith. Then she went to see a priest. Then she took instructions and became a Catholic.

Who made her a Catholic? Alice, by her good example and without saying a single word, preached the little sermon that did the great, good work. And her reverence for the Holy Mass and the Blessed Sacrament prompted her to preach it.

Now, isn't it true that children can be God's apostles if they only want to?

“Father, Forgive Them”

“**B**LACKROBE, what is your desire?” It was down in Texas half a score of decades ago, when that country, not even now quite “tame,” was a wilderness and wild, inhabited by numerous and bloodthirsty bands of reciprocally inimical savages—North American Indians, we are wont to call them. Immigration to the Lone Star State was just beginning then, that deceptive immigration which lured thousands and thousands of foreigners to the weary wastes and boundless prairies of the Great Southwest, there sadly to disillusion them and to add to unimproved temporal affairs a frequent loss of faith and spiritual goods, owing to an almost entire absence of the maternal ministrations of Holy Church.

But zealous missionaries are to be found always and everywhere; for God has ever raised up hardy and self-sacrificing men to do that pioneer work which enables the Church to boast of universality in the most common acceptance of the word. Such a hero was Bishop Audin, Texan missionary, of wide repute, indeed, but better known to God than to men, like all of his kind, and reigning now, we may confidently hope, with the Lord of all tribes and peoples. Astounding would be the recital of the hardships which he endured, of the sacrifices which he made, in order to convert some at least of the Indians of Texas to the God they knew not. Only the faith of Christ can inspire mortal men to bear what our Catholic missionaries have ever borne. Before the mind's eye of such heroes there must needs float continually the image of Christ Crucified, that first Great Missionary, Who endured hardships and suffered deprivations awfully, unutterably immense, and Who died upon an infamous gibbet in unspeakable agony for the salvation of immortal souls. Yes, indeed; the heart of the apostolic missionary

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must beat in unison with the Sacred Heart of Jesus dying upon the cross. He must follow in the footsteps of the Master Who died that men might live—might live forever in heaven. For the servant is not above the master. Of such a spirit was Bishop Audin. Twenty years had he already toiled among the savage tribes of the southern prairies. It was then that the incident took place that is here related.

One day during a missionary tour among the scattered Indian tribes a small detachment of warlike savages called upon him, earnestly requesting him to visit their chief, who had been severely wounded by an arrow in battle. Bishop Audin had some knowledge of medicine and surgery, especially as regards the concoction and application of herbs and such like rude but effective remedies of the wilderness. This the Indians knew; and this it accordingly was that not infrequently obtained entrance for him into tribes and villages and wigwams to which he would not otherwise have had access. Such was the case in this particular instance. Full of sympathy and urged by charity, the bishop unhesitatingly consented to accompany the rude delegation, and immediately made the few preparations necessary for the journey. For two whole days they marched onward, making a bee line for the village in truly Indian fashion, traversing trackless forests and boundless prairies and with the heavens above as their only tent. But ere the third day was half spent they arrived at the wigwams of the afflicted tribe. Some refreshments having been offered to the missionary by the natives, he was led into the wigwam of the chief. A powerfully built red-skin in the prime of life lay upon a rude couch of leaves, grass, and moss. He was still adorned with all the trappings of his dignity. Weapons of various kinds lay scattered about in the wigwam; and on the posts hung bunches of hair, the scalps of the conquered, the grewsome emblems of Indian victory. Near the couch lay a shell full of some refreshing drink for the suffering warrior. An enemy's deadly arrow had inflicted a mortal wound in his side.

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But with stoical indifference he gazed into space, scarcely noticing his visitor, and enduring his agony with the heroic resignation of the manly chieftain. Yet his breath came and went in short, quick gasps, breathing forth, as it were, his well-nigh irrepressible pain. But now he turned a warrior's fearless eye towards the missionary and spoke the above words in the deep guttural of the savage:

"Blackrobe, what is your desire?"

"I would ask whether I can be of any assistance to you, or whether I may procure your admission into the beautiful wigwam of the Great Spirit," answered the missionary.

"Blackrobe, I am past all cure! The arrow struck my life." And he showed the priest the ugly, gaping wound. It was indeed beyond all cure. "But," he continued, "do you speak to me about the Great Spirit."

"If you would enter into the beautiful wigwam of the Great Spirit, you must believe everything that He tells you through me, and you must let me wash your head."

"What says the Great Spirit?" Calm and serious was the gaze which the savage chieftain fixed upon the missionary.

The latter then began to speak of God, Who created heaven and earth and all things else, the one only God, Who is the Ruler and Preserver of the universe, Who has revealed Himself to man in three Divine Persons, in order to show him the way to His beautiful wigwam. The chieftain nodded his assent and approbation.

"These things are not new to me," he said slowly; "also I know of the Great Spirit and that He has spoken to men."

But the missionary continued. He spoke of the happiness of man in God's garden of Paradise; he told of how our first parents fell into sin, thus bringing upon themselves and upon their descendants the curse of God, untold misery, suffering, sickness, and death.

The chief did not seem at all to marvel. "All these things have my fathers also taught me," he said.

"Tell Us Another!"

But now the priest began to speak of God's great mercy, of His pity for poor, fallen mankind. He told of how the Son of God had become man and had come to earth to save the human race, to make men happy again, to lead them back to the beautiful wigwams of the Great Spirit. At these words the wounded savage raised himself slightly. His features, distorted by pain, assumed an expression of complete astonishment.

"Blackrobe," he exclaimed, "that is beautiful and good to hear! What you now say is very good to hear and makes the heart laugh." Then his glance fell, and he became silent.

"This Son of God," continued the missionary after a pause, "has sent me to you to tell you what you must do."

"And what is that, Blackrobe?" asked the dying Indian, without raising his eyes.

"He wants you firmly to believe in Him and to love Him with your whole heart."

"Blackrobe, all that I have done. Even from the moment you mentioned His name have I done it. Why should I not believe the Great Spirit?" With that he extended his hand to grasp the priest's and press it to his forehead.

"Not only must you love Him," said the missionary, "not only must you love Him Who became man for you, but also all men, even your enemies."

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when the Indian cast upon him a quick glance of utter amazement. "Even my enemies?" he asked in a voice of surprised incredulity, as his eyes glowed and flashed fire. "You desire, Blackrobe; that I forgive my enemies?" He placed his hand upon the gaping wound in his side. "No; the Indian warrior cannot do that; for when I am gone my brothers must revenge my death. Blackrobe, seven men shall fall to blot out the chieftain's death—such is the law among the redmen! An enemy is not to be forgiven."

Then he paused, too much weakened to continue. The thirst for revenge had exhausted the little remain-

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ing strength of the wounded warrior. For a moment the missionary was silent. Then in calm, persuasive tones he assured the chief that not he, but the Great Spirit, commanded this, even the Great Spirit Who created all things and Who became man out of pity for the fallen race. But the Indian shook his head and sought to expostulate, saying that it could not be so and that the Great Spirit could not issue such a command. Blood must be revenged by blood: such was the teaching his fathers had handed down. Thereupon two other savages who were in the wigwam likewise sought to convince the priest of the entire lawfulness of bloody vengeance. He bade them be silent.

"But you surely wish to dwell in the beautiful wigwam of the Great Spirit," urged the missionary; "and so do your enemies."

At this the missionary began to despair of the chieftain's conversion. But he seized the crucifix suspended from his neck, held it up to the Indian's gaze, and exclaimed, "Behold, O Indian chief, the Son of God, Who in His great goodness came to earth to save fallen mankind, was also wounded unto death by His enemies. And this Redeemer, in order to procure your entrance into the beautiful wigwam of the Great Spirit—this Redeemer, while hanging upon the cross, asked the Great Spirit, His Father, to forgive His enemies. That is what the Son of God did, Indian chief, and you are not willing likewise to forgive your enemies?"

The dying warrior was dazed with astonishment. He gazed upon the crucifix. A look of utter amazement spread over his features.

"Blackrobe, do you speak truth when you say this?"

"Yes, I speak nothing but the truth."

The missionary ceased speaking. The chief fell back upon his rude couch and remained quiet for a long time. Exteriorly he was calm and seemingly indifferent, but interiorly a mighty struggle must have been taking place. No one dared to break the tense silence.

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Finally the Indian spoke in deep, earnest tones. "Swear to me, Blackrobe, swear by the Great Spirit, that what you say is truth."

And the missionary answered with a voice in which there was a ring of persuasive solemnity, "I swear it by my God, Who is also your God, and Who has sent me to seek the redman and to do him good!

"For the Great Spirit also made your enemies, and He wishes likewise to show mercy to them. But now, enemies cannot live together in the beautiful wigwam of the Great Spirit, because eternal peace dwells there. Hence, forgiveness must take place on earth."

All this the dying warrior could not comprehend; for where human passions are concerned, there the intellect is doubly darkened and the will thrice weak. He shook his head and instinctively clutched a murderous tomahawk which lay near. And grim revenge distorted his features, in which could already be seen signs of approaching dissolution.

"Blackrobe, if it be truth that the Son of the Great Spirit, dying upon the cross, besought pardon for His enemies and forgave them, then also I must do even as He did." The chief turned to the two Indians. "Summon the men of the tribe," he said.

The savages instantly obeyed, leaving the missionary alone with the suffering warrior. Both were silent. But in his heart the priest was sending up fervent prayers to the God of pardoning love for the soul of this poor mortal. Meanwhile he did what little he could for the chief's comfort. The latter showed himself grateful for the least service.

Gradually the wigwam filled with braves, all armed to the teeth. They formed a semicircle round the couch of their chief and waited expectantly. The most renowned men of the tribe were there.

"I must die," the wounded Indian began after the last man had entered. "The Great Spirit has sent this Blackrobe to me, and I must let him wash my head in order that I may enter into the Great Spirit's beautiful wigwam. But first I must do what the Great Spirit

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did, and that is but just. He forgave His enemies; also I wish to forgive my enemies."

The assembled braves stared at him in astonishment. Not one dared to speak. "Warriors, braves, swear to me by the Great Spirit for my sake to take no revenge on my enemies! I, your chief, desire it. Cast aside your weapons and swear!"

And the warriors cast their weapons to the ground and swore as the chief desired.

The missionary now called for water in order to baptize the dying Indian. When the latter beheld these preparations he said, "Lift me up!" The priest tried to dissuade him, seeing that every movement caused him excruciating pain. "Indian braves, lift me up and lay me on my face," he repeated. "I feel that the Great Spirit Himself would speak to me." The men did as he commanded.

Thereupon the veteran warrior received the Sacrament of Baptism with the resignation and simplicity of a child. His soul was washed whiter than snow. His fellow-warriors were moved to the heart. At a sign from the priest they then left the wigwam, only to be converted a few days later to the faith of their departed chief.

The missionary remained with the dying Indian yet another day, teaching him to pray and rejoicing in the contemplation of a faith that was as simple as it was sincere. Then that hardy chieftain died—died repeating His Master's prayer, that prayer which divine love forced from the livid lips of a suffering and dying God, "Father, Forgive Them."

Where There's a Will There's a Way



UTSIDE Nature was all aglow with the soft life of beautiful May. Amid the sweet blossoms of a nearby apple tree a finch was revelling, filling the air with its cheery melodies.

The schoolroom windows were wide open, and the sun-laden breezes, bearing along with them the songs of the bird in the apple tree, stole in and gently kissed the rosy cheeks and the yielding hair of the many little students who were sitting so quiet and still at their desks, listening respectfully to the parish priest, as he gave them fatherly admonitions and holy instructions.

It was the week after Whitsuntide and the first hour in Christian doctrine for those who had received First Holy Communion during that time of singular graces.

Serious words that went home to the heart did the priest address to the little group, admonishing them to be ever faithful little soldiers of Christ. Then, turning to the whole school, he gave the command for which many a one had been impatiently waiting: "The First Holy Communion class for next year will please arise!" And arise they did with a will—and with a certain feeling of responsibility, too; for well they knew that from now on sharp eyes would be watching their conduct everywhere. The priest gave them their places together in a conspicuous part of the room. Twelve boys there were and fourteen girls. Their faces reflected the joy of their hearts. But Frank Steffer was the happiest of them all.

Frank was a very poor lad. His father had been school-master in a neighboring village and had died young, while Frank was still in the cradle. From that day on his mother had to work day and night to keep the wolf from the door. Often they were in bitter want. The art of doing without things was, accordingly, one of the boy's earliest lessons. But it was not

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the only one. He learned to pray also. Despite the many hardships, however, the good mother managed to find scores of ways in which to make her darling boy happy. Many a piece of furniture had to be disposed of in the course of time to make ends meet; but no matter how hard pressed, Mrs. Steffer never sold her husband's books. No; she read them again and again and communicated as much of their contents to her son as he was able to grasp. And Frank was a bright lad. His sweet little mother and his father's books were the dearest things he had on earth.

And now he belonged to the first communicants of the coming year. The thought filled him with joy and pride so great that he could hear his heart thump and throb in exultation. Immediately after the close of school Frank hastened home. With a shout of joy he burst into the room where his mother was working. Everything was quickly told her with all the volubility and frankness of childhood. How happy mother was, and how gladly she assented to everything! And yet, as soon as Frank had left her and was again playing with his friends, she could not but sigh deeply. From the boy's talk she had noticed once again that nothing was nearer to his heart than the desire to study for the holy priesthood, to become a missionary. To become a missionary! How in the world did Frank ever get such an idea? Well, anyhow, he got it. He was intensely interested in the Missions; he knew their geography as well as he did that of his own country; and there was nothing that he would not have denied himself sooner than not give his regular donation to the Holy Childhood. He was all heart for the poor heathen babes. He wanted to lead each and every one of his colored brothers and sisters to the feet of the dear Divine Savior. But now, his mother knew that with all her care, her almost scrupulous sparing and saving, she could not afford to let her boy study, much as she would have liked to do so. Hence that deep sigh.

Of course, the lively little barefooted boy did not

let the thought of obstacles in the way distress him in the least. Indeed, what does a lad for whom no ditch is too broad, no tree too high, know about the impossible? And yet it would surely hurt him when he finally realized that the life of a missionary was not to be the life for him, when finally he would have to choose some calling that demanded a lesser outlay and promised quicker returns.

So that evening Mrs. Steffer spoke about the matter seriously to Frank. She told him that the trade of a carpenter was one that brought good returns, that it was respectable and would help much to support them both, and that a distant relative had promised to take him as an apprentice free of all charge. The boy listened without a word, not wishing to hurt his mother's feelings. But afterwards, when he was in bed, hot tears gushed from his eyes and his heart ached as never before. Suddenly he thought of his First Communion. What was it that the pastor had said to them? "My children," he had said, "you must now show what stuff you are made of; it is up to you to give proof of your good will. The Divine Savior wants a warm, zealous heart, no timid half-heartedness; sacrifice is what He wants, not careless take-it-easy!" Sacrifice? Well, if he would no longer speak about his heart's desire, if he would act as though he had never thought of it and at the same time learn the carpenter's trade,—surely, that would be a sacrifice, and a great one at that. But he would, he *must* make it! That same evening Frank Steffer promised his God that he would make that heroic sacrifice. But how about the poor heathens? Was he, then, going to desert them? Could he do nothing more for them than give his tiny contribution to the Holy Childhood? Oh, if he could only buy a heathen babe! Of course, it would have to be brought up a Christian. Yes; he had to save one, at least one! But how? He did not know. Suddenly a plan came to him. Rising hastily and throwing a few wraps around him, he took a

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stubby candle and cautiously crept down the stairs to the cellar. Then he made a light and looked over the pile of rags and bones that was in a corner there. It was his only treasure. Strange—he had thought there were more: he was somewhat disappointed. How much were they worth, he wondered. Thoughtfully he began to ascend to his room. But the cellar door creaked and the stairs groaned, and then his mother called. Quickly the obedient boy slipped into her room and knelt beside the bed.

“Mamma,” he said, simply, “I have a great plan. I’m going to collect old rags and bones until from the sale of them I get enough money to buy a heathen baby; and this I want to do before my First Holy Communion. And, mamma, dear,—after that I’ll begin to learn to be a carpenter.”

The mother understood her boy. She knew that he had made an heroic sacrifice. She understood, and gently brushed back the hair from his brow and kissed him lovingly.

Frank returned to his room. But for a long time he could not sleep. He was planning; and in fancy he beheld the precious pile down in the cellar growing ever bigger and bigger.

Frank Steffer was one of the most diligent of lads when it came to studying. In his class he was always in the lead. In catechism he was remarkable—never without the right answer at the right time. So it need not be said that he now became a diligent collector also. He was ever finding rags and bones and such like things in the oddest of places, here and there and everywhere. Even the dogs had to look out for their bones when he was around. Sometimes some of his comrades helped him to collect, but for the most part he was alone. But the neighbors began to be sparing: they no longer threw away old rags and bones as formerly, but saved them for Mrs. Steffer’s boy. Of course, business was anything but excellent, and it was only pennies that Frank was able to put into

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his little bank; but the pennies grew to dimes and the dimes slowly—oh, so slowly!—grew to dollars.

And now Whitsuntide drew nearer and nearer. Frank's mother had already prepared everything for this great day of his. Of course, it cost her such careful saving and not a little labor, but finally everything was at hand, not too expensive, indeed, but neat and clean and quite sufficient. Frank had studied diligently. He had taken the matter of his First Holy Communion very seriously and was well prepared. Only one thing was wanting and that he was in high hopes still to get: a heathen babe. He had promised Jesus that he would buy one before his First Holy Communion. That promise he must keep. As Whitsuntide drew nearer and nearer he became more diligent than ever. On the day before Maundy Thursday he dashed across the street (he was rarely seen on the streets now) to the Sunset View Hotel. The proprietor's son was a special friend of his and kept for him all such things as wrappage, paper boxes, tinfoil. It was not long before he emerged with a heavy bundle upon his back. But Frank was proud of his burden and hastened away to Marx's, his dealer, to see how much it would bring him.

With great ceremony old Marx found and adjusted his huge spectacles, cautiously stirred up the little balls of tinfoil, and finally weighed the whole carefully. "Twenty-four cents!" he said, with solemnity. "I would hardly give that much to anyone else, but you are a good, diligent boy, and you shall have it."

Frank's first impulse was to jump over the shaky old counter for very joy, but he refrained, inasmuch as that would have been a dangerous experiment, that same counter being so full of trash, old junk, and what not. So he did the next best thing; he eagerly held out his hand, received the money, and with a few bounds was out on the street and away.

What a joyous race homeward was not that! With a cry, "I have it, mother, I have it!" he burst into the room. Quickly he poured the whole contents of the

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bank into his mother's lap in order that she might help him count. And, sure enough! he had known the sum by heart. There were five dollars and three cents. So much money had not been together in that room for many a day. It was badly needed at home, to tell the truth; but the good mother thought as little of keeping it as did her noble boy. She placed the five dollars in an envelope, while Frank washed hands and face and tidied up a bit. Then he hurried off to the priest's house. The good old priest was not a little surprised when the boy entered his study and explained the purpose of his visit. A regular cross fire of questions and answers followed. Frank openly told the priest of the whole affair; soon the latter knew of everything: of the poverty at home, of the mother's anxiety, of the desire of the boy's heart. With the words, "Well, well, now, there's no particular hurry about the carpenter business. We'll discuss that matter after Whitsuntide," he dismissed the lad.

Of all Frank's happy days one not long after Whitsuntide was the happiest. The Divine Savior had received his present of a heathen babe and had given Himself to Frank in return! Oh, he was so happy! Of course, there were no visits to his little home, neither were there any gifts. But mother and son were strangely, sweetly happy in the love of Jesus and in their own—for each other and for Christ's poorest poor. It was evening, and they were sitting quietly in the twilight of their modest little room, when suddenly a knock was heard at the door. And who should enter the room but the parish priest! For fully half an hour he conversed earnestly with the mother and the happy first communicant. And after he had left the big boy arose, threw his arms about mamma's neck, and wept like a baby. Why, he was going to study for the priesthood! The good parish priest had said it: he would see to everything, he would provide. Frank was to go to him for his first Latin class the very next day. Oh, the dear, good pastor! And what

kind words he had said! "We need big-hearted, warm-hearted men over there in the mission field,—men who are not afraid of sacrifices and who know how to overcome difficulties. You'll do, my boy; for, *Where there's a will there's a way!*"

The Wisdom of a Little Girl



ONE DAY Florence was given a beautiful crucifix as a present. On the cross was a nice, though very heart-breaking, figure of the crucified Christ.

"Now, Florence," said her daddy, "to show me how pleased you are with the crucifix, you must tell me the difference between the figure of Jesus hanging on the cross here and the dazzling white Host the priest holds up for adoration during Mass."

Quickly came the answer—an answer that made daddy prouder than ever of his precious girlie. "When I look at the figure on my cross, daddy dear," she said, "I see Jesus and He is not there; and when I look up at the little white Host I do not see Jesus, but He IS there."

"You darling!" said daddy, as he took her into his arms.

Wordless Prayer



ONE DAY a Sister Mistress told me something rather interesting about a girl who was a model candidate in a convent somewhere. One day Bereta came to the Sister and complained gently, "Sister, I cannot pray; I go to the chapel; I kneel there; but I simply cannot pray."

"Well, just continue to kneel there at the appointed times, and let God speak to you," said the Mistress wisely. "In His own good time He will give you back the spirit of prayer; meanwhile your very presence will be adoration." Obediently she did as she was told, and after about a week the strange dryness left her and never came again. Thus God sometimes tries us, to see what we are praying for, His honor or our own consolation.

This little incident from the life of Sister Eulogia reminds me of something similar in the life of the sainted Cure d'Ars. One time he noticed a peasant kneeling in church for hours and hours without prayerbook or rosary—just looking at the altar and saying nothing. When the holy priest asked him how that was, and what he was doing there, he replied, with holy simplicity, "Jesus looks at me, and I look at Jesus." And then, you see, heart spoke to heart, the best of prayers.

Very similar is the little story I am leading up to. It was during a mission that a young man presented himself to the Reverend Missionary. "Well, what can I do for you?" asked the priest kindly. "Very little," was the rude reply. "Mother told me to go to confession, so I thought I'd come to see what kind of a man you are. But as regards confession—I don't care a snap for that!"

"So?" inquired the priest, not at all taken aback. "Well, why not make the mission? It's a time of grace

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for all. Anyhow, do a little something, please. If you love pure womanhood, do me the favor of going over to the statue of that beautiful lady. Just kneel there and look at her. You needn't pray. Then after half an hour we'll maybe see each other again."

The young man went. He knelt; he looked upon the image of Mary; he melted under the benign, mysterious influence of that gentle Lady. When all the others had been to confession that night, he came to cast himself at the feet of the missionary and make a good, and a very good, confession.

He had looked at Mary, and Mary had looked at him. She had looked at him! And we know that those upon whom Mary Immaculate casts her eyes of mercy cannot be lost.

The Drops of Precious Blood

WHAT I am going to tell you now happened many, many years since; in fact, as long ago as 1264. And it goes to show once again the tender goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ, truly present in the Holy Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine.

We know, of course, that the bread when consecrated during Holy Mass becomes the true Body of Christ and the wine His true Blood. And we believe it most firmly because Jesus, Eternal Truth, tells us, "This is My Body." "This is My Blood."

So did the saintly priest whom we are going to speak of in this little story. He believed. But God permitted him to be troubled with cruel doubts, so that his belief in the Real Presence of Jesus under the appearances of wine suffered great temptations.

Day and night the pious priest prayed to God to be relieved from this temptation. But his supplications seemed to be of no avail. So, sorely troubled, he finally set out for Rome to see the Vicar of Christ, the Holy Father, and get advice, strength, and consolation from him. For, being unable to fathom the mystery, he could not rid himself of his terrible doubt, though he prayed so much to God.

Now, while passing through Italy on his way to Rome, he stopped at a little town called Bolsena, not far from Orvieto. There he said Mass in the church of St. Christina; and there it was that God was pleased in a striking manner to answer his prayers and dispel his doubts. For at the consecration of the chalice, when the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of the Blood of Christ, that sacred Blood suddenly became agitated and trickled over the rim of the chalice. As it fell upon the corporal it took on the appearance of blood-red drops. Naturally, the priest was filled with reverential fear. He tried to conceal

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the fallen drops by folding the corporal together, but four drops fell upon the marble pavement at the foot of the altar. Seeing he could conceal the miracle no longer, and hearing that the Pope, Urban IV, was at that moment at Orvieto, the priest hastened thither with the blood-stained corporal, explained everything and received absolution. The Pope, convinced of the miracle of the blood-besprinkled corporal, had it borne to the cathedral in solemn procession. But the marble stones upon which the four drops had fallen were kept in the church of St. Christina at Bolsena and are there treated with the greatest reverence to this day. In 1290 the erection of an immense, magnificent church was begun, in which the miraculous corporal was then exposed for veneration.

Our religion is eternal truth, because it is the word of God; and though we do not see with our bodily eyes, yet with the eyes of faith we penetrate the veils of hallowed mystery. Sometimes, indeed, as at Bolsena many years ago, God helps our faith in wondrous ways, but mostly He wants perfect faith. "Blessed," you know, "are they who see not and yet believe."

The Looking-glass Mamma Sent Her

MY! BUT she was peevish and petulant (fretful and complaining) and, I fear, a little proud, was youthful Marie. Youthful? Why, yes, for she was an Academy girl of only fourteen summers. Academy girls, you see, are about the same as High School girls, in many instances, and we know these latter are slightly inclined to think just a little too much of themselves—sometimes, or, rather, some of them. Oh, but they can become silly and vain, especially when they are attending public High Schools and are quite out of Sister's loving hands.

"Oh, what a change takes place in so many of our girls after they have graduated here and been a year or two in the public High School!" a Sister once said to me, so sadly.

But Marie, the youthful heroine of this tale, was not such a High School girl; she was attending an Academy conducted by Sisters, a high-grade boarding school for girls. And yet she was so vain!

She was rather disobedient, too—always wanted to have her own way, was not a bit punctual in observing the order of the day, and lapsed into sullen silence whenever the least remonstrance was made to her, no matter how gentle it might be.

So she was ill-tempered and disagreeable most of the time. And the rest of the time? Well, she spent much of it fussing before the mirror. She forgot that true beauty, real attractiveness, is in the mind and heart, and that these are reflected best by the face that God gave. (Of course, we must use mirrors—what would we do without them?—but, I once told somebody, it's one thing to *use* a glass and another thing to *misuse* it—see?)

Yes; and when her birthday came around in May she wanted nothing more nor less for a birthday gift than a beautiful mirror. So she wrote a letter home

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to mother. "Dearest Mamma," she wrote, "as a birthday gift I want a nice, large looking-glass, oval, you know, and with a handsome silver frame. Don't forget, Mamma! I want it so badly!"

Now, Sister Directress had already informed Marie's mother of her daughter's very unladylike conduct and of her sad lack of real gentleness and charity.

Well, Marie's birthday came and with it a package and a letter from home. "Oh, it's the mirror!" the girl exclaimed in glee. "First I'll read the letter."

This is what she read: "Dearest Marie, I am sending you a handsome oval mirror with a silver frame—just as you wanted it. Look into it often and you will become more beautiful, loving, and attractive from day to day." That was all. Not a word more.

Quickly Marie untied the package. Yes; it was oval; the frame was of silver; but there was no glass in it! Instead of glass there was a beautiful oil painting of the fairest Virgin of virgins, Mary Immaculate, the Mother of Jesus. And underneath the picture were engraved the words, "Mother, do I please you?"

Marie was alone; but a burning blush covered her face as the whole thing came home to her and she understood the salutary lesson. She cast herself upon her bed in wounded pride and wept bitter tears of mortification.

But she was a good girl at heart, and the picture was really so fair. Mary's kind intercession must have brought helpful grace, too; for before the month of May was over Marie was a changed girl; none more obedient, kind, gentle, loving, and modest than she.

For she had obeyed Mamma and spent much time before her spotless mirror with its touching, sweetly reproachful question, "Mother, do I please you?"

And when, in June, she returned home and her mother clasped a pious little Marie to her heart, the latter murmured, "Mamma dear, Sister now tells you I've become so beautiful in heart and mind. If so, then it's all because I 'fussed' so much before the darling mirror you sent me."

The Bleeding Crucifix

“**F**ATHER, please tell us something that will make us love lilies.”

This mysterious question was asked by a group of children who were gathered round Father John. The priest, however, understood. He had spoken to them a few days before about the lily of holy purity. And this is the way they asked for something that would help them keep that lily spotless. They looked upon it as a pearl of great price, too, and they wished to guard their treasure carefully.

“Well,” answered Father John, “a good way to love the lily is to be filled with horror at the very thought of what is not chaste. A good way to stay far from the steel chains of immodesty is to remember how frightfully strong and binding those chains are. So listen while I tell you a story; and while listening, pray to the sweet Queen of Heaven that you may never let the devil bind you in the awful chains of the vice of impurity.

“It happened in Spain in the days of St. Francis Borgia. A Spanish nobleman who was addicted to that awful sin once became very, very sick with a loathsome disease. He was dying; but despite all the entreaties of his friends he would not confess his sins. Well, St. Francis heard of the case and went to see the man. But before he went he cast himself at the foot of a crucifix and prayed for help from above. ‘Go,’ said an interior voice, ‘go to the sick man and exhort him to penance; I promise you that My grace will not be wanting to him, so that he can repent if he will.’ The Saint went. But, ‘Never will I confess!’ snarled the sinner. Again the Saint cast himself at the foot of the crucifix and prayed. And again the voice spoke, ‘Go back and take this crucifix with you. Surely, he cannot resist the sight of God dead on the cross for his redemption!’ Once more the Saint went.

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But 'I will never confess!' gasped the dying wretch. Then St. Francis held up the crucifix before him. And—oh wonders of the mercy of God!—it miraculously appeared torn with wounds and covered with fresh blood. But oh! the strength of the chains that bound that miserable man! His hard heart was not softened even by that sight. He glanced fiercely at the crucifix, turned to the wall, gave a gasp, and died—in his sins!"

Father John paused. The little lovers of the lily were so frightened! "Of course, also this sin is always forgiven by God if the sinner is truly sorry and promises amendment," he said. "But the farther one gets away from the lily, darlings, the harder it is to come back and to be truly sorry. So cling to it always. And don't let even the least little dust of an immodest thought rest upon it for a moment. Blow it away at once with a breath of trusting prayer!"

The Crucifix

I WONDER how many of you can tell me where Ratisbon is. Oh, so! First you want to know *what* it is. I see. Well, Ratisbon—and do not forget it—is a city; and it is situated in Europe, in Bavaria, on the Danube river. But, really, it is not about that historic city that I am going to speak to you today; no, it is, first, about something sad that happened there, and, then, about something edifying, and, finally, about something wonderful.

Now, in the year 1255 Maundy Thursday, the day on which Jesus gave us His own sweet Self in the Holy Eucharist, fell on the twenty-fifth of March. That day it happened that a certain priest of Ratisbon had to carry the Blessed Sacrament to a dying person. In those old Catholic countries, you must know, the Blessed Sacrament was, and to a great extent, still is, carried to the sick publicly in the ciborium, the priest being vested and accompanied by altar boys with lighted candles and a bell. And the faithful follow, so that there is sometimes quite a procession. That can be done, you see, where everyone is Catholic and there is no danger of irreverence and insult. Of course, this seems somewhat strange to us who must almost always carry our Lord secretly, hiddenly, for evident reasons. Anyhow, that priest had to cross a brook that was bridged by merely a plank. He slipped; and the Hosts were spilled into the muddy water. Oh, what an awful thing! It almost broke the holy priest's heart. With much difficulty the sacred particles were collected. But the good people were inconsolable. It was due to their carelessness that the Blessed Sacrament had been exteriorly so dishonored. They could not forgive themselves for not having built a decent bridge over the little brook for the feet of him who bore their Eucharistic God. So they resolved that, in

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reparation for their negligence, they would build a church over the spot where the Body of the Lord had lain. They at once set about it, and so eagerly did they work that by Easter Sunday, three days later, a little wooden chapel was ready. Then the Hosts were taken thither with all pomp and rejoicing. On the eighth of September, that year, the tiny house of God, which had been beautified still more by that time, was consecrated by Bishop Albert and given the name St. Savior's Chapel. Yes; this is both the sad and the edifying thing I wanted to tell you about.

And the wonderful thing? That happened two years later. A priest was saying Mass at the altar in the chapel one day. Altar boys were there; many people were present. On the altar candles were burning. In the center, in front of the priest, stood an exceptionally large crucifix—not so high up as ours usually are. At the Elevation the priest raised the Body of the Lord aloft. Then he spoke the sacred words of consecration over the chalice. But as he lifted it up a doubt came to his mind—for just a second! "Is this truly the Blood of Christ?"

At that very moment the right hand of the Savior on the crucifix before him unloosed itself and reaching out took the chalice from the hands of the doubting priest. Oh, you can imagine how he started back in fear, how quickly he repented his doubt! Then the Crucified gave back to him the chalice containing His Most Sacred Blood.

Yes; all the people saw it; and they prostrated themselves in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament with wonderful fervor. Within three years that wooden chapel became famous throughout the land. Rich offerings came, and a huge stone church was built beside the modest chapel. Strange to say, the church at its side fell to decay even before the chapel, which was restored in 1855 and consecrated by Bishop Valentine. And today not an hour passes but what this church is visited by the faithful.

From Mamma to Papa

Oh, yes; we believe in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, even though we see not. And we believe because Jesus has said, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood." For we know that Jesus is God. And we know that God can neither deceive nor be deceived.

From Mamma to Papa

IT WAS on the Sunday before the feast of the Annunciation, and Father John was talking to the little ones. This is just a tiny bit of what he said:

"It once happened that a European nobleman was taking a walk with his wife and two darling children in a large park. Suddenly, to the dismay of all, a mad dog came rushing along. With glaring eyes and foaming mouth, he made straight for the two children. What did they do? Their father was nearest to them; he was the braver, the stronger. And yet the terrified little ones instinctly ran, not to him, but right into their mother's arms!

"The nobleman was not a Catholic. He had often wondered why Catholics think so much of the Blessed Virgin, why they run to her for everything. Is not the heavenly Father, God, powerful enough for them? So he had reasoned. And here his own sweet little children were teaching him an unforgettable lesson. After all, there was something very natural, and touching, and tender, about the devotion of Catholics to Our Lady. And so he continued to think and to think!"

Father John paused. "And what do you think?" he asked a little girl in the front row who was looking thoughtful and bright.

"Oh," she answered softly, "when I run to mamma I get whatever I want from papa."

Which Do You Choose?

IF THERE was one thing Irene liked to do more than anything else it was to dance. In fact, she was just crazy about it; and because this kind of amusement is so very dangerous for poor, weak human nature, the misguided girl soon found herself on the broad, seemingly flowery path that leads away from heaven. Poor Irene! Had she but listened to the warning voices of those who had her welfare most at heart and who so often pleaded, "Be careful; though dancing is not wrong in itself, still it were better to avoid the dance hall. Oh, stay away, if you value your greatest treasure, the pearl of holy purity. Make the sacrifice for Jesus' sweet sake and be truly happy!"

Yes; it was quite evident that Irene was not what she used to be. Some sad change—a change for the worse—had come over her. In the little country town she had come from she had been quite a different girl—a devout child of Mary.

Well, when Blanche, her schoolmate and fellow-Sodalist, came to the city, Irene was delighted. She would show her friend a good time. The first thing, of course, was a dance or two. Now, the dances seemed decent, quite so, in fact, so Blanche went—just to please her friend. And thus she became one of the "bunch," as that circle of girls called themselves.

Then it happened that the first Saturday came around, on which the Sodalist girls were to go to confession preparatory to receiving Holy Communion the next morning. After supper Irene and the "bunch" called.

"We're off for a dance far out in the country, Blanche. Get ready, dear!" she cried gaily.

"Oh, Irene!" Blanche said reprovingly, quite shocked. "Don't you know this is Saturday night, on which we are especially forbidden to go to dances? And have

Which Do You Choose?

you forgotten the Sodality, Irene? We must go to confession tonight."

"Confession! Pshaw! Do you still believe in that nonsense, Blanche? What's the use of going so often? We are obliged to go only once a year, you know. And I don't see why we shouldn't be allowed to dance Saturday night, too, if we feel like it. Well, we're going. If you want to be a pious little Sister's girlie—oh, all right! Suit yourself!" And Irene laughed a cruel, mocking, derisive laugh. The "bunch" smiled with contemptuous pity on the "Sister's girlie."

Blanche's poor heart was sorely wounded. But she was brave and faithful under the temptation. "I'm going to confession. I'm going to be a true child of the Church and of Mary," she simply said.

The next morning two striking things happened. There was an automobile accident on Union Avenue. At early dawn a car loaded with girls coming home from some dance hall crashed into another car. Several of the young ladies were injured. One was taken to the hospital in an unconscious condition. It was Irene. The doctor looked grave. "It's a fractured skull," he said, "with injury to the brain. We may be able to save her life, but she will be deprived forever of the use of reason."

That morning, too, just a little later, the landlady of a respectable Catholic boarding house for girls went up to wake one of the boarders, a child of Mary, who had been to confession the evening before and wished to go to Communion at the early Mass. She rapped and rapped. There was no answer. Rather surprised and slightly alarmed, she gently opened the door and entered the room. There upon the bed, neatly tucked away and with her hands piously joined, lay the young boarder in the sleep of death. A sweet smile was upon her face, as though she had passed away in some beautiful dream. It was Blanche!

Oh, how good God is to those that are true to Him and to His Mother Mary! How virtue is rewarded. And vice? O my Jesus, mercy!

The Miraculous Hosts

EVERYBODY, of course, knows where Europe is; and some people even know where Bavaria happens to be; but few indeed know where the village of Deggendorf is located. Well, it is in Lower Bavaria; and it is the scene of this story.

Years and years ago, in the year 1337, to be very exact, strange things happened in that town—and more awful than strange. Those were troublous times of wars and rumors of wars, and of rebellion against the lawful authority of God's holy Church. That is why the Jews, who abounded in that part of the world, thought it a fine chance to exterminate the Christians and Christianity. Surely, a house divided against itself could easily be made to fall!

This is how they began—a rather strange way. A number of Jews at Deggendorf, men engaged in commerce, resolved to get possession of the Blessed Sacrament in order to vent their unbelief upon it. How to do it? They thought deeply and long. Then Alice came to their minds.

Alice, you see, was a Catholic girl of the place. But she really liked fine clothes far too much for one so poor. And finally it came to pass that she had to pawn all her nice garments to the Jews in order to get a little money for the bare necessities of life. "Ha," thought the cunning descendants of Abraham, "here's our chance!"

So they said to Alice, "Only bring us ten consecrated Hosts from your church and we will give you back all your clothes without pay."

'Twas an ugly temptation. But alas! Alice fell an easy victim. And she did an awful thing. Listen with tears.

In the little church of St. Martin, Mass was said at a very early hour each day, because of the persecutions

The Miraculous Hosts

that were raging. One morning Alice went to Holy Communion there. After she had received the Blessed Sacrament she buried her face in her handkerchief and took the sacred Host from her tongue. Then she carried it home. This she did ten successive times, whereupon she took the Hosts to the waiting Jews.

Yes; she received her beautiful garments back; but what did they profit her? Scarcely had she left the house when a bolt of lightning fell from the blue sky and struck her dead upon the street. What a fearful punishment for her fearful crime! She sold her soul for clothes. Alas! what could they do for her in the fire of hell?

But our thoughts speed back to the Blessed Sacrament: we are so anxious! It was in the enemies' hands, in the hands of the Jews. They gloated over their prize. In every thinkable and unthinkable way they insulted the Hosts. They pierced them with sharp awls—and crimson drops of blood trickled from them! Then they tore the adorable particles with the thorns of a wild rose—when suddenly a beautiful Child appeared before them. Were they frightened? A little, though not much as yet. Their hearts, you know, were harder than the hardest rock. They placed the Sacrament upon an anvil and with blows from heavy hammers tried to crush it. But again the Infant—it was Jesus—appeared in dazzling splendor, floating in the air above the anvil and gazing at them with such a sadly reproachful mien! Then they placed the Hosts in an oven so hot that it would have burned bread in half a minute—but the Hosts remained unchanged in their fair whiteness, and the Babe appeared again! Now great fear finally took possession of their souls, and they thought to put an end to the Hosts by eating them. But do you think Jesus allowed that? Oh, never, never! Each time the Hosts were raised to the mouth they changed into that mysterious Babe. And they could not eat them. At once enraged and awed, the baffled Jews now placed the Hosts in a sack filled with poison and sank them in a brook that ran through the

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village of Deggendorf, thinking thus to conceal their dark crime. But the poison polluted the water of the brook, and many became sick from using it. Then suspicion fell upon the Jews. And one night a watchman saw a light over a certain spot in the brook and heard strange wailing cries. He called his fellow townsmen; they examined the spot and found the sacred Hosts. Thereupon one of the Jews confessed to the crime—and condign punishment followed.

Ah, yes; the miraculous Hosts were placed upon a silk cushion that was enclosed in a crystal vase. This was then placed in the High Altar of the church at Deggendorf. There the wonderful Hosts are today, the same as they were centuries ago, a proof of the Real Presence and of the power of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. But what am I saying? A proof? We need no proof for what God tells us; and He has said, "This is My Body."

And huge pilgrimages are wont to be made to that church; from thirty to forty thousand pilgrims have come at one time. And countless are the graces given there by our dear Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Whom Jesus Joins

MABILA was her name. Whose name? Ah, yes; I am plunging into this little tale of mine in all too headlong a way. But, you see, my mind is so full of thoughts of a thing of rare beauty that it is inclined to wander somewhat. Oh, it's such a precious jewel, this virtue of holy purity! Surely, it is the pearl of great price. "Oh, for heaven's sweet sake," I said to some darlings a short time ago, "lock up that jewel in the safe of Mary Immaculate's most pure heart. Then the world, the flesh, and the devil, those three merciless thieves, will never be able to get it—never."

But what has this to do with Mabila, and who was she? Mabila was Edmund's mother; and Edmund was a youth who knew that without the beauteous virtue of holy purity there can be no other virtues in the soul. He afterwards became the renowned Archbishop of Canterbury. And his was a saintly mother, too, as mothers of saints are wont to be. So when she sent Edmund to Paris, together with his brother Norbert, to pursue his studies there, she earnestly begged of him to be prayerfully careful and told him of some beautiful practices that would help him preserve his innocence.

Edmund arrived at the city. Oh, it was dangerous there: so many bad, dissolute young people everywhere! But what did he do? He locked up his pearl in the safe of Mary's heart. He was wont to call upon her when even the slightest shade of danger overshadowed him—in thought. Happy boy! how the angels of God must have liked to be near him!

One day Edmund happened to be in a room with some other young students, when all at once these began to say nasty things, things that would have endangered his innocence had he listened to them. But he did not listen. He arose in displeasure and ab-

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ruptly left the room. But scarcely was he outside when a handsome youth met him, a youth whose beauty was more than heavenly, and who straightway began to strengthen and console him with words of thrilling sweetness. "Because you left them, I now join you," the stranger said.

Stranger? Was he? Edmund looked up into his fair face. There on his forehead was written in letters of gold the word JESUS!

“I Have Deceived Myself!”

I SN'T it strange, sadly so, to see how little people outside the Church worry about personal sin? They try to live up to the conventionalities of life and are rather careful to avoid all that might, externally at least, interfere with their pursuit of life, health and happiness, but that is all. How sad!

But Henry was a Catholic lad, in name at least. And he should have known that the scoffing world around him was blind, wilfully blind, and was not to be listened to, nor to be followed. That he did not want to know it is just the reason why he got on the fatal path that leads right down to hell, the path of impure pleasures.

“Oh,” he would say, when the priest and others who had his welfare at heart would warn him to leave his wicked ways and turn back to God, “these things are not as bad as you try to make me believe. Why, everybody’s doing it! It’s only natural; and you can’t tell me God forbids it as you say He does. Don’t be trying to fool me with that Grandma talk.”

One day there was a hurried sick call. It was to Henry’s home. Father Meriss hastened thither. Too late! When he arrived Henry was dead. He knelt with the family to pray for the repose of the departed soul. Suddenly, to the horror of all, the head of the lifeless boy moved, his eyes opened, he raised himself slightly; and in a fearful voice that thrilled the kneeling group with fear, he exclaimed, “I have deceived myself.” Then he fell back upon the bed, lifeless again.

“I have deceived myself!” The priest knew only too well what that meant. Before the judgment seat of God Henry’s eyes had been opened.

But it was too late!

A Warning

THEY were two brothers. Arthur was ten years old and Charles was fifteen. Arthur was pure and holy, like a snow-white lilly, like a shrinking, modest violet. But Charles was given to dark, secret, shameful things. That is why he could not endure his brother so truly good. Was it not a constant reproach to him? Yes; and that is why he tried to teach the younger lad wicked things—things that were not purity, not modesty. That is why, when he found that his brother, despite all hints, advances, suggestions, remained true to God, he resolved to force him into sin.


“You three conceal yourselves in that wood over there,” he said one morning to three of his companions in vice, “and I will get Arthur to come out with me. Then we’ll teach him something, whether he likes it or not.” “Sure!” they agreed and laughed. There was the devil in that laugh.

“Let’s take a walk in the woods, Arthur,” said Charles a few minutes later. “I want to show you the beautiful squirrels.” What a lie it was! But the impure are liars always, because they are the children of the father of liars, the devil!

They crossed a meadow. How green it was! The sky was clear and blue; birds were singing. But as they neared the woods wherein the wicked ones were hiding, dark clouds suddenly hid the sun from sight. There was a fearful flash of lightning and a deafening roar of thunder—then a second—then a third. And Arthur, the innocent lad, stood trembling with fear and awe. Only a few feet from him lay his wicked brother’s body, contorted, burnt, and torn, struck dead by terrible thunderbolts from on high. And his soul . . .

Yes; if we be true to God He will fight for us even with the lightnings of heaven.

Nothing to Laugh At

“ H, WHY do you make such a fuss about medals and such like things!” Clara exclaimed impatiently. “Do you really believe that wearing little pieces of metal is going to help you any?”

Clara was Rose’s friend, but, poor girl! she had become careless and was beginning to laugh at religion. Maybe it was because her father was a non-Catholic. Or was it because of the bad company she did not avoid?

“Oh,” Rose answered earnestly, rather pained, “they do help, Clara. Why, their very blessing brings a blessing, and the devotion they represent, surely that’s a great blessing, too.”

And then she told Clara this little incident. During the great World War a little girl had sent her father, who was at the front, a loving letter. Her father was in the trenches when the letter reached him. As he opened the envelope and pulled out the sheet of paper a little object fell to the ground. He stooped to pick it up. And just as he stooped a bullet whistled through the air just where his head had been. A shade of pallor crept over the soldier’s face as he realized how chance had saved him—as he thought. But was it chance? He bent down to pick up the object. It was something hard wrapped in tissue paper.

He unfolded the paper. In his hand he held a little medal that his darling girlie had sent him!

The Altar Boys of Santarem

VES; SOME of you, I'm sure have heard me tell it; but a good story will bear retelling, won't it, especially if it's a true, true story, as this one is. It happened in Portugal, in a city called Santarem, in the year 1265. That was almost seven hundred years ago, wasn't it? Yes; and it happened just like this. Listen.

At Santarem there lived at that time a saintly priest called Father Bernard. He was a Dominican priest, a religious, what you of this day and land would call a missionary priest. There he lived, but not alone. Many other priests lived in the monastery with him. So, of course, many Masses were said every morning. And where many Masses are said, why, there many must be served, you know. Now, there were two wonderful boys in that city, holy boys, as pure as angels and as good as—oh I don't know what. Every morning they were up bright and early and on their way to the monastery to serve at Mass. There they would wait on the priests at Mass so devoutly as to edify everybody, especially at Father Bernard's Mass. You should have seen Pedro and Juan, that is what they were always called, at the altar—like cherubs! Ah! their hands were always nicely folded, their eyes fixed on the priest; there was no playing with their fingers, no moving restlessly about on their knees, no making of genuflections with such haste as almost to fall over oneself, and all that. No; they were little models! And that is why Jesus left His Mother's arms to come to them. Oh, did He do that? Yes! How? Just be patient.

Pedro and Juan always brought a bit of breakfast—some bread and a little fruit—with them, because they had to stay at the monastery so long. This they would then eat in a tiny side chapel where the Blessed Sacrament was not kept. Now, near the place where

The Altar Boys of Santarem

they used to sit down there was a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Boy Jesus in her arms. One day, as they passed this statue, the darling Child miraculously bent down and asked them to let Him share their meal. Were the boys surprised and did they try to run away afraid? No, no! They were too good, too used to being in the presence of God, for that. All they did was to beam with joy and to give Him a hundred thousand welcomes.

"Of course, You may come, dearest Jesus! We will be only too glad to give You everything and to let You be with us every single day. Yes, O Jesus, do come!"

And just think of it! Jesus left His Mother's arms and sat between the boys and ate of their bread and fruit. How He must love good altar boys! And now, that wonderful thing happened not only once, but many times. Jesus loves to be with angelic children. And, tell me, are not good altar boys, who always kneel among the crowds of angels that surround the Blessed Sacrament, especially during Holy Mass, visible angels? Oh, they ought to be! Why, next to the priest they are the nearest to God, to the Blessed Sacrament. And, next to the priest, they get the most graces and blessings, too, if only they behave as they should!

Yes; to come back to my story, there was Jesus away from His Mother's arms and so chummy with those boys. Soon the lads could keep the beautiful secret no longer. They told the whole story to Father Bernard. You can imagine how the dear priest thanked God for such a favor. Then he made a request.

"But, boys, why do you not ask Jesus to invite you to dine with Him also? Sweetly beg of Him to return the invitation; and include me also."

"Oh, we never thought of that, we were so happy!" said the lads. "But we will do it, Father, tomorrow."

So the next day, when the Child Jesus sat between the two youngsters again they begged of Him to let them dine with Him, too. "And not only we would like to do so, but Father Bernard also," they added.

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"And that is just what I have been longing for you to ask, beautiful boys," the Infant gave answer in a sweet, sweet voice. "Because you are so good, you and your Father Bernard shall dine with Me in My Father's kingdom." And He told them to be ready on Ascension Day.

Oh, how fervently Father Bernard and the boys prepared for that mysterious banquet! And when the great day came the priest celebrated Mass with all the burning love of a seraph, the boys kneeling on both sides like two glowing cherubs. And after Mass was over they knelt down at the foot of the altar and, overcome by the intensity of their love, they prostrated themselves on the altar steps and fell into a sweet, gentle sleep—the sleep of death.

And then was accomplished in them just what Jesus had promised, as it is written in the Holy Bible, "And I dispose to you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom" (St. Luke 22:29, 30).

Ah, the beauty of it all! After Mass Jesus had always taken lunch with the boys; that morning the boys dined with Jesus in heaven, as He had promised them. What a reward!

What a fine thing it is to be good—fine on earth and finer in heaven!

“Can’t I Do Something for You, Papa?”

YES; MARIE was a dear little girl of just ten summers. She was kind and gentle to everybody, and her large brown eyes were all full of loving helpfulness. Really, I believe she knew as well as I do that God takes special delight in looking upon boys and girls that are obedient and meek and humble of heart.

Now, this gentleness of Marie’s made her so obedient and willing to help that she could read a request in mamma’s eyes, or papa’s, or sister’s, almost any time one was there. She would not even wait to be asked, if she could help it.

One evening when papa came back from work, tired and rather out of sorts, and was sitting at his desk reading the paper, Marie softly went up to his side. Why? Because, you see, her love and her desire to be a little angel of charity and to make others happy sent her thither.

Yes; there she stood. Then she lightly touched papa’s arm and said, in her soft, musical voice:

“Can’t I do something for you, papa?”

Papa turned and looked at her. At first he did not understand. He was so tired and worn out.

“What do you mean, Marie?” he asked.

“Can’t I get you something, or make you comfortable and happy in some way, papa? For I love you so.”

Then he understood. This little one for whom he was working so hard wanted to help along by her willingness. His eyes lighted up.

“Of course you can, darling,” he cried, as he took her into his arms. “You can give me one big, loving kiss. And I thank God over and over again for having given me the precious girlie that you are, my own Marie!”

Oh, if little people only knew how they can make a heaven out of home by being bits of sunshine, and sweetness, and obedient helpfulness always!

Preserve Your White Necktie!



ONCE upon a time—maybe when your papa was a little boy or your mamma a little girl—there was a lad going to a college in the city of Rouen, France. He was a remarkably good fellow, George was, very much like those boys we read about in the lives of the saints. Always at the head of his class in school, he was likewise ahead of most boys in church and at home. In church he was pious and devout, a lover of prayer and piety, and a giver of good example; at home he was sweet-mannered and helpful and kind and loving to everybody. That's the kind of a boy George was. His father and mother, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, must have been very proud of him.

It was while going to this college that George made his First Holy Communion. On the day preceding that happy event the Reverend Rector, according to a beautiful custom that prevailed there, invited each of the boys to make some written resolution regarding future conduct and to hand it to him for safe-keeping. All the lads did so. George did so, too. And this is what he wrote: "I promise always to wear the white necktie of my First Holy Communion day, and to place it aside only in case I should have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin." The Rector, naturally, was rather surprised at this odd resolution and asked George if he wouldn't change it, if he wouldn't try to find some other.

The boy, however, said he would rather not. That was his resolve, and he would keep it. His mother was summoned to the college to try to change her son's mind; but so sweetly and well did he talk it over with her that she joyfully permitted him to have his way.

The next day George received Jesus into his heart for the first time. And after that tiny white wafer of

Preserve Your White Necktie!

what seems to be bread, but is really and truly the Body and Blood of Christ, had been placed on his eager tongue, he whispered again to that Gracious Guest, "Jesus, I will keep my white necktie always—for You!

Two weeks passed, and George was wearing his white necktie still. All the other boys had placed theirs aside long ago. They thought it funny that he should keep his on. So they began to tease him.

"Say, George, you forgot to take off your white necktie. Gracious! but you must be studying day and night to forget a thing like that," they said with friendly banter; for everybody thought the world of him.

Then George told them why he was keeping it on and about the resolution he had made. After that they never said another word. They now thought more than the world of their saintly comrade. That necktie was telling the fair story of sanctifying grace.

Years passed. The short but bloody Franco-Prussian war broke out. One day the Prussians managed to occupy a dangerously strong position at Mans. They had to be dislodged. A brave little detachment of French soldiers, three hundred in number, was sent to do it. And they did it! But of those brave three hundred two hundred were killed or wounded in the doing.

After the battle the Reverend Chaplain was hastening about among the wounded and the dying, administering the consolations of religion, when he came upon a young man who was very near the end.

"Would you like to go to confession?" gently said the priest, bending low over the bleeding form.

"No," said the youth with a happy smile that showed how little he was afraid to die. "I made my last confession only three days ago and have nothing to confess. Just place me on the grass, Father, and give me the Last Sacraments. And, Father," he murmured, "may I ask another favor of you? You see this white necktie? On the day of my First Holy Communion I

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promised never to lay it aside unless I should stain my soul with mortal sin. I have kept my white necktie, dear Father. Prayer and the Sacraments and devotion to the Blessed Mother of God have enabled me to keep it. Father," the voice grew weaker, "tell mother it was never stained except by the blood that I shed for my country."

It was George. From that field of battle his pure soul sped away to God.

Preserve your white necktie!

Why Obey?

WHY OBEY? What a question! And yet it falls from rebellious little lips only too often. So I will tell you a story to show what a wise and pious Prince thought of obedience. Here's what he thought. "He who will not obey those whom God has placed over him, be they parents, teachers, guardians, or other superiors, will not obey God Himself." How true; for if you think it over you'll see that we obey God in them.

Now for the story. The young Prince of Wales had a very good private teacher, a governess. But one morning he flatly refused to study his lessons.

"Either you will study your lessons or stand over there in that corner for half an hour," said the governess, after all other means had failed.

"I will neither study my lessons nor will I stand over there in that corner!" answered the young Prince proudly.

Finding she could do nothing with the boy, the governess informed his father of the matter. Prince Albert entered the room.

"Sit down on that chair," said he, "until I return." He soon came back with the Holy Bible in his hand and from its pages read to his disobedient son the oft-quoted words, "Who spares the rod spoils the child." Thereupon he gave the lad a sound thrashing.

"Now," he said, "when your teacher bade you either to study or to stand in the corner you would do neither the one nor the other. You will, therefore, now both stand in that corner and study your lessons there, until the governess sees fit to release you. And remember, my son, that young people who do not obey God in their superiors will neither obey Him in Himself when they are grown up."

A Beautiful Legend of Corpus Christi



ONE FINE morning in the month of June old Mother Birchtree told her children not to be a bit frightened should some one come in the course of a few hours and cut them down.

"Yours may be a glorious lot," she said. "But only the fine, tall, straight trees will be taken. Listen, my children, it may be your happiness to stand honorary guard when the Lord Jesus moves in triumph through the streets on the feast of Corpus Christi tomorrow. It is indeed true that afterwards you will have to die, but you will see that which is the most beautiful on the face of God's earth, and you will be giving your lives for Him. I could not see Him when I was young, because I have grown crooked." And Mother Birch sobbed.

Nearly all the young Birches were delighted with the prospect; only a few tried to hide themselves, faint-heartedly, behind their mother. The others were only proud of the honor that might be accorded them and looked forward with joy to the hour of their glorious sacrifice. "After having seen that which is fairest under the sun," they said to each other, "we can afford to die; for then a nameless longing would consume us, and we would die slow deaths anyhow. As it is we shall die like so many martyrs."

Now, one tiny little Birch heard all this, too; but it was too frail, too small, too gentle—a mere baby Birch. And when it hesitatingly asked whether it would probably be taken also, the others only looked sympathetic and shook their leaves most doubtfully. Then the little Birch became very sad indeed; not even its mother, nor the sunshine, nor the birds that sang so jubilantly in its branches every morning, could console it in its sorrow. To see the Lord Jesus! Oh, the twinkling stars up above its head so high had told it so much about this dear, good God; when the others

A Beautiful Legend of Corpus Christi

were asleep it used to listen to their wonderful talk for a long, long time.. To adorn the way along which He would walk; to see Him; to die for Him;—what an enviable lot!

* * * *

Suddenly the tread of heavy feet was heard, and rough voices sounded. Ah, surely, many of the youthful Birches, so brave but a moment before, must have trembled then, even in spite of themselves. But they were quickly cut down, one after the other. With pain, and yet joy, did Mother Birchtree look upon her children as they fell before her very eyes. Theirs was to be a happy lot indeed!

“Oh, if they would only come to me,” the weak little Birch sobbed in a whisper.

“Enough,” called out one of the voices. So it was not to be taken along after all! Oh, how it had hoped against hope that it would be needed anyhow! A dew-drop ran down its fair white trunk like a tear.

“One is still wanting,” a voice said again, “but there is not a single nice tree left. Ah, here, this one will do . . .” A blow, a fall, and the little Birch, happy in its very pain and all aglow, was piled onto the wagon with the rest.

It is the great feast of Corpus Christi. All in a row the Birches stand proudly side by side along the flower-covered road, young and fresh and smiling in their bliss, each beauteous leaf trembling in adoration, the favored guard of honor of the Lord God, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to be adored forever! But where is our little Birch, the blessed one? Oh, the good fortune that fell to its lot! In addition to other larger and leafier trees two smaller ones were wanted in order the more symmetrically to adorn the high altar in the open. They were placed just next to the tabernacle. And one of them was our thrice happy little Birch!

Oh, how long it seems before the Eucharistic King comes! Now the last Gospel is being read. And lo!

"Tell Us Another!"

the procession enters: first the little girls, dressed in white, with wreaths upon their hair, looking for all the world like angels; then the priests in their gold-embroidered vestments; and then, beneath the starry baldachin, the venerable bishop reverently bearing the Most Blessed Sacrament. The little Birch sees the Lord at once; it cannot turn its eyes away from Him, the God of all, Whom the stars spoke about in those holy night watches and Whose delight it is to be with the children of men under the humble appearances of bread.

He has come to the altar at last. The little Birch can see Him from very near. And oh! what a trembling passes through it from head to foot when the bishop places the golden monstrance upon the altar of spotless white and its branches touch the glowing gems. Now it will die gladly—oh, so gladly! It has seen that which is the most beautiful upon the face of God's blessed earth—Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The *Te Deum* is intoned. All join in, and the mighty volume of sound jubilantly ascends on high. So it must be in heaven, where the saints and angels sing the praises of God; such melodies must be in the hearts of those whose constant prayer is this, "Thy Eucharistic kingdom come!"

* * * *

But the little Birch was dead. Too great had been its happiness: it had died of joy. The others still stood proudly there, fresh and strong. But baby Birch let its leaves hang pitifully low. Its withered branches drooped as they leaned lightly against the tabernacle, a touching symbol of love clinging in death to the Lord Whom it had joyously clung to in life.

The Black Knight

IT WAS EVENING.

The setting sun that summer day looked down upon a different world from the one we know,—yet the same. Newspapers, telephones, telegraphy, wireless and otherwise, and the thousand and one ways and means of twentieth century communication had not even been dreamt of then; had they been part and parcel of everyday existence, as they are now, they would have been conquering space and overcoming time and hurling across the continent the news of the mighty deeds of the chivalrous and romantic King of England, Richard I, the Lion-hearted. Engaged in a holy crusade, he had just defeated the famous Saracen general, Saladin, at the memorable battle of Ascalon, in which forty thousand followers of the Crescent were slain.

Henry VI was the ruler of Germany in those strange days,—days of fair knightly valor, indeed, but of deeds of deepest, darkest treachery, too.

It was evening.

And in an open space in one of the rugged forests that ranged along the castled Rhine strode the Black Knight. He had laid his heavy armor aside. As he paced to and fro, eager desire was depicted on his features, mingled with an occasional gleam of half savage light that betokened a something akin to desperation.

Suddenly out of the densest of the neighboring thickets there came another knight—grim, weird, silent, dark. Over his shoulders was thrown a mantle of the freshest blood-red.

“Sire,” said he, as he halted the Black Knight in his feverish walk, “sire, wherefore this solitary pacing alone?”

“What!” was the knight’s answer. “Art thou a stranger in these parts that thou knowest not of to-

"Tell Us Another!"

morrow's happenings at Goldstein Castle, where rules the Duke of Leoforte?"

"Nay; for how should I know, sire, having come to these parts but yestereve."

"List, then, friend. Hear the cause of my retreat hither, and if thou canst aid with good advice, assuredly will I reward thee highly."

"I seek no reward," the stranger rejoined. "Speak."

"Tomorrow," said the Black Knight, "even at the vesper hour, there shall be a ducal tournament at the Castle yonder. The knights from all the country round shall be there to vie each with the other in feats of strength and skill. And when all awards shall have been duly meted out the bravest of the brave shall assemble together with their bows and their arrows, and the archers' contest shall take place. And hearken, stranger,—to him who pierces the clover leaf shall be given the hand of the Duke's youngest daughter, the fair and comely Bernice. For that treasure I would gladly give my all. I love her with a passionate love. And I am here because I must win on the morrow, and in this evening air must make sure that the prize escape me not."

"And if it escape thee, friend, what then?"

"What then!" The Black Knight's eyes gleamed in impotent fear and fury. "It may not escape me, man! For that prize I would sell my very soul thrice over!"

From somewhere there came a hideous, mocking laugh.

The stranger with the blood-red mantle drew near, so near that his hot breath fanned the Black Knight's cheek as he grated into his ear. "Thou wouldst have my advice. List. I can tell thee how to make thy aim as unerring as the thunderbolt that is hurled from on high to strike the rebellious blasphemer down. Come."

With that he took the Black Knight by the arm and they strode to a neighboring vale. The stranger pointed to an object beneath a clump of trees. It

The Black Knight

was a wayside crucifix, erected by the piety of the faithful. Upon a rude cross of hewn oak hung a wooden figure of the God-Man in His agony.

"Dost thou see that?" he asked in the strangest of whispers.

"The cross, thou meanest?" At that word the stranger shrank back and seemed to cower to the earth.

"Yes," he said, turning his face away with nervous twitchings. "Friend, let that be the target for thy practice on the morrow morn. The arrow that thrice shall pierce that image shall win the hand of the fair Bernice."

As mysteriously as he had come the stranger disappeared.

Long the Black Knight pondered. The arrow that thrice should strike the Crucified, that arrow should win. Heated passion would be sated if only thrice he struck it. It? What? God, or the image of his God? Deep into the night he pondered on.

And when morning dawned he took his powerful bow into his hand and chose an arrow straight and strong. And placing himself at a fair distance from the wayside crucifix, he stretched the bow—and sent the arrow flying through the air.

It struck—the head of the Crucified!

There was a hollow sound, then an ominous silence. In the surrounding forest the morning breeze seemed strangely to moan and to wail.

Again the Black Knight placed the arrow to the string, and again he sent it flying through space.

There was a dull, lifeless sound as it struck—the feet of the Crucified!

And even then a low groan came from somewhere. The Black Knight staggered and paled.

"Once more," he muttered hoarsely, "and she will be mine!"

And for the third time the fatal arrow was hurled toward the image by the sinewy bow.

"Tell Us Another!"

It struck! This time it entered—the wound in the side of the Crucified!

For one breathless moment the very heart of nature seemingly ceased to beat.

Cold sweat stood upon the Black Knight's brow as with trembling hand he pulled the arrow from the wound.

And as he drew it back, lo! there gushed forth a stream of purple blood. And the eyes of the Crucified opened and looked upon him in unspeakable reproach. Then a lightning flash came from the highest heavens—and the Black Knight stood in the midst of an awful flame—and even as it struck him down the stranger in the blood-red mantle rushed from somewhere and seized him in a grip of steel—and the earth opened wide at the terrific crash of the thunderbolt's roar—and the two were swallowed up in the dark abyss that yawned below!

All was quiet. And it seemed as though nothing had happened. At the foot of the crucifix the grass and the flowers were growing even as before. Birds were singing in the trees that sheltered it.

An awful thing had come to pass, but had left no sign behind it. But no—at the foot of the crucifix lay an arrow. Blood had trickled from its point and down along the shaft. And even as it had flowed it had written two words, which words were the arrow's name.

And the words were: "*Mortal Sin.*"

The Wonderful Remedy

HAVE you ever heard of the Sambesi River? It is in Africa, the Dark Continent, where so many millions of black people are still waiting to learn about the one true God in Whom we, thanks forever to the goodness of the Savior, happily believe.

Well, Father John Loub, a missionary priest, began the holy labors of an apostle on that mighty river's banks. There were hardships to be endured, numerous obstacles to be overcome—of course there were. It is ever so in all apostolic undertakings. But despite the scorching heat of that torrid climate, despite the more than uncomfortable prowling of blood-thirsty leopards and other beasts of prey, Father John persevered in his arduous task of saving those poor, abandoned souls. And soon, to his great joy, he had a fine little Christian congregation; and those who were not yet of the household of the faith were beginning to look with greater favor upon the Church of Christ. Especially were the little black children a source of consolation to him. And their fervor and evident delight in coming often to receive our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament filled his heart with sweetest joy. For he knew, as I know, too, that Holy Communion is the great antidote of sin.

On a certain day one of the Christian lads—Stephen was his name—came to him and said, "Father dear, the chiefs of our tribe say that you have a wonderful remedy against immodesty. The Christian children love and cherish holy purity above all things; they never say anything indecent; they never sing bad songs. But they like to sing beautiful religious hymns. The chiefs say that they get the good medicine when they approach the altar rail in the morning."

"Of course I have such a remedy," said Father John with a pleased smile. "And, Stephen, my boy, I'm sure

"Tell Us Another!"

you know what it is, too. Now tell me, what are the great safeguards for the pearl of virtues, for holy purity?"

"Avoidance of bad companions, devotion to our dear Lady, and the frequent reception of Holy Communion," answered Stephen quickly.

"Yes; and especially Holy Communion," said Father John. "It is the bread of pure souls, the food that makes virgins, the great antidote against sin, particularly against the sin of immodesty. Oh, Stephen, if only everybody would come to partake of the remedy often! How happy they would be in the possession of the priceless treasure of holy purity!"

"Oh, Father dear," cried Stephen, "preach about this wonderful remedy tomorrow when the heathens come to the mission! Tell them that the chieftains are right, that you have such a medicine, that if only they became Christians they may have it every day."

"I surely will, my boy," said Father John, patting the pious lad's woolly head; "I surely will."

And he did. Thereafter he made more Christians still; and his own little flock gathered more frequently than ever at the table of the Lord.

Oh, if we only knew how Jesus hungers and thirsts to be received by us, His poor little creatures! If we only knew what a wonderful help, what an unfailing remedy it is in fighting the battle we all must fight to keep unstained the pearl of virtues. Then we would come to Holy Communion often, often, oh so often—every day!

“Of Course, God is Everywhere!”

HENRY was only a little boy. But he was made of real boy stuff; and boy stuff, you know, is the stuff that boy saints are made of. So whenever Henry was asked by his companions who wished to tease him or by older people who did not pray enough to have God always in their hearts, “Do you really think God is watching you now?” he would answer quickly and manfully, “Of course, God is everywhere!”

Yes; God is everywhere. He sees everything we do. When Bernard hid in a dark place to do something bad he thought nobody saw him. But God saw him. So did his Guardian Angel.

Now, one day James and John were playing together, when James asked John to do something wicked. John did not want to; he knew it was wrong. But James kept urging him, until at last he was about to give in. Just then he raised his eyes and saw his mother watching them from a nearby window. “I can’t,” he whispered to James. “Mother is watching me.”

Henry was not like Bernard, nor like James, nor like John. He knew that God was looking at him always; so he never did anything he would not like to have God see. He was made of real boy stuff, you know.

One day Henry was in church with the other children. He knew that God was there as everywhere, and that He was there in a different way, too, in the Blessed Sacrament, as God and Man, under the appearances of the little white Host, looking right at him from the tabernacle. So one day when some other boys made fun in that holy place and whispered to him, he would not join them one bit, but just kept his hands nicely folded and prayed to Jesus to make him a good boy.

Now, who can tell me which was the right kind of a boy, Henry, Bernard, James, or John?

A Modern Tarsicius

YES; IF there was any earthly thing that Lucy O'Donnell loved, it was the quiet reading of devout books,—especially the inspiring lives of the saints. But she loved good Catholic story books, too. And—you know girls often are that way—she liked books for boys also. That's why, on this particular evening, she was reading "Rear-don Rah!" the book for boys of which Father Finn says, "There were parts which made me catch my breath. There were thrills which I long considered as having passed with my salad days." Well, the story of Tarsicius, charmingly told, made Lucy catch her breath, also, that evening. There was Tarse's father, Secundus—Dan, the hero of the story, called this Roman boy-martyr "Tarse," for short, you see. Yes; there was Tarse's father fighting with a huge bear in the Circus Maximus, for the amusement of cruel Nero and the pagans of Rome. But, because Secundus could not overcome the powerful brute, he was beheaded in seeming disgrace. Then there was Tarse telling his sweet, delicate, saintly mother, Agatha, about it. It broke her heart—she never recovered from the blow. "Go to the Bishop in the catacombs; he may want you after the Mass," were the last words she spoke to him on earth.

Listen. It is in one of the catacombs of Rome, those subterranean caverns and tomb-lined passages in which the bodies of the Christian dead were buried, in which the early Christians were wont to hide and practice their religion in times of persecution. It is after Mass. The Bishop is speaking.

"Publius is not here," he says, "and it was his happy task to carry the Body of the Lord to the Christian prisoners who await their execution. Who will volunteer for the dangerous mission? Who will take the

A Modern Tarsicius

consolations of the Christ to hearten His blessed martyrs?"

In an instant Tarse has stepped forward. "Oh, my Father, if I may, if I am not unworthy,—gladly would I bear the Body of the Savior, and gladly would I die for Him."

"Tarsicius, the Lord has chosen you. You shall go."

Carefully, reverently, the venerable Bishop places the tiny white Hosts that are Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, in a folded corporal, puts the corporal in a burse, and confides it to the kneeling boy, who conceals it under the folds of his tunic, above his heart, and presses his hand over it protectingly. Then, with the Bishop's blessing, he departs for the dreary dungeon where the Christian martyrs are longing for the Bread of Life.

Modestly he hurries through the streets. Ah! there on that corner a group of boys sixteen or seventeen years of age are playing. One is pouring water on the head of another and mumbling incoherent words. Then there is a roar of rude laughter. They are pagan boys and are playing baptism, mocking the holy Sacrament!

They see Tarsicius coming. "Hi, Tarse!" calls out Corvinus, the leader of the boys, "come and join us in our game!"

"Oh, I cannot!" exclaims Tarse, hurrying past with his hand pressed tightly to his breast.

"Oh, but you shall!" cries Corvinus, bully that he was. "Set on him, boys! He is a Christian carrying an enchantment!"

In a twinkling a crowd of rowdies had piled upon Tarsicius. They seek to tear his hand from his breast, but it is as an arm of steel: they cannot budge it. Then they strike and kick him; they trample his body under their feet. Bleeding from many wounds, the noble boy-martyr breathes his last.

"Beat it, fellows!" Corvinus cries suddenly. "There comes a Christian soldier. If we fall into his hands....." In a moment the rowdies have disappeared.

"Tell Us Another!"

Tenderly the sturdy Sebastian kneels beside the body of the Christian hero. Tarsicius is dead. Reverently he draws away the hand that still rests above the boy's heart. It comes away without resistance now. He takes out the burse and corporal. He slowly opens it. It is empty! "God will protect Himself when His little messengers cannot," the strong soldier murmurs in an awed and trembling voice.

Then—"Listen to this sad news item," Lucy's father was saying. With a start the girl came back to the things of the present and remembered that she was only reading a chapter or two in "Reardon Rah!" It was in the family sitting-room, and father was reading the paper.

"Listen to this sad news," Mr. O'Donnell said. "'Last night the Catholic church at Oakstead was profaned. All the precious vessels of gold and silver were stolen. The sacred Hosts were spilled upon the floor. Also a little pyx containing a consecrated Host is missing. It was used to carry the Blessed Sacrament to the sick. Catholics everywhere are deeply grieved at the sacrilege.'"

There was a moment's tense silence. The profanation of the temple of the Most High and the insults offered to the Eucharistic God cut that truly Catholic family to the quick. Then the father spoke.

"Let us kneel down and say seven Our Fathers in honor of the Blessed Sacrament in reparation for the injury done and in petition that the sacred Host may be recovered."

They knelt to pray. Then all retired with heavy hearts.

* * * *

"Lucy, I wish you would go up into the hills to visit poor Granny Janet this morning. She was rather weak yesterday and is all alone, you know. We must care for the poor sick body for Jesus' sake. Take this basket of good things along for her. Be careful that you do not stumble and break the bottle of wine."

Lucy's mother was always so thoughtful. Granny

A Modern Tarsicius

Janet was not really anybody's grandmother. She was all alone and had no relatives in the whole wide world. For years she had lived quite retired in her little shack among the hills, walking regularly to the distant church, praying much, and working in her little garden. But now she was failing fast. Only by chance had Mrs. O'Donnell found it out.

"O mother," cried the girl, "I'm so glad to go! Granny is so good and holy; she prays so much; I like to be with her. I'll take good care of her and then come back to let you know how she is."

"Do, dear," said mother, giving her a loving kiss. "That's a good girl. Now run along."

When Lucy reached Granny's little house everything was very quiet. She rapped at the door. No answer. Wondering what could be the matter, she quietly opened it and entered. There was the dear old soul in her bed, so sick and weak that she could not even speak above a whisper.

"Darling," she whispered, as Lucy went to the bedside and took the cold, trembling hands in her soft, warm ones, "darling, Granny is very, very sick."

"Oh, Granny, see," the girl said lovingly, "mamma has sent you such nice things to eat and a bottle of wine to make you strong. You'll get well again, Granny dear."

"No, darling. I feel that I am going home to Jesus. Oh, yesterday the priest was here and heard my confession. He said he would come tomorrow with the Blessed Sacrament. But I am so sick this morning. Darling, I am dying, and I fear to die without Jesus. Oh, how I wish I could receive my Savior in the Holy Eucharist!"

Lucy—poor little girl!—was frightened. Granny looked so very pale; her hands were so icy. And there was such a strange look in her eyes. The girl wiped the cold sweat from the wrinkled brow and said, "Granny, take a little wine, please, and get strong. Then we'll say the rosary together."

With difficulty the old lady sipped a little from the

"Tell Us Another!"

glass Lucy held to her lips. Then they prayed. Again and again through that little room floated the beautiful words, "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." But the dear old lady's voice grew ever weaker and weaker.

And all the while Lucy was thinking, "Oh, may I leave her alone and run down to the village for the priest? Is there yet time?" Suddenly she made a pause. "Granny," she called, bending low over the dying woman, "Granny, can you stay alone? I will run down after the priest."

A light sprang into the woman's eyes. She nodded, raised herself slightly, then fell back on her pillow in a daze—unconscious.

Throwing her cloak about her, Lucy hastily left the house and ran towards the village. The church was three miles away. Would the priest arrive in time? Would Granny live that long? On she sped; but so eager was she that she forgot to be prudent: she had not yet gone the first mile when she sank to the ground exhausted. She could go no further. In her excitement and eagerness she had overtaxed her strength.

As she sat there upon the ground, sobbing aloud and thinking of Granny—and the priest—and the Blessed Sacrament, a shiny object in the grass along the road caught her eye. She looked closer.

Why, it was a tiny golden box, somewhat like a watch case. And on the cover were engraved the letters IHS!

Then all of a sudden a light broke in upon the girl—and she thought she knew. Surely, it must be a tiny pyx, the little vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is taken to the sick. Oh, she remembered! Such a pyx had been stolen when the tabernacle of the church at Oakstead had been broken open the night before last. The thieves must have lost it as they fled away. And the paper said—it contained a Host!

Reverently she kneels down. Dare she touch it? Yes; she may see—ah! she must. If Jesus is there she must care for Him! Slowly she opens it. A host of

A Modern Tarsicius

dazzling white lies in the golden case. Closing it ever so gently, she folds her hands and bends low in adoration. "O Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament . . ."

What to do? She may not leave it here. And will it not now be too late if first she goes to the village for the priest? She thinks of dying Granny longing for the coming of Christ.

Then a sudden inspiration came to her, and she made a quick resolve. Yes; she would take the Blessed Sacrament to Granny herself. It wouldn't be wrong. Maybe that was just what Jesus wanted. . . . God's ways are so wonderful. . . .

Taking a clean white handkerchief from her pocket, one that was still unused—she lovingly placed the golden pyx within its folds as in a corporal. Then pressing it against her heart she ascended the hills to the hut—not running this time, but walking with reverent haste. And all the while she prayed to God upon her heart that Granny might not die too soon, that she might first receive Him in Holy Communion.

She entered the room. There lay Granny. Was she dead? No; though unconscious, she was still breathing. The girl bent over her and cried eagerly, "Granny, I've got Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

As one called back from the dead, Granny's eyes opened. She tried to lift her arms in welcome to her God while the girl quickly explained everything. Then that hasty preparation—but Granny had long been prepared.

And there, in the golden glow of the flickering candle, Lucy knelt and adored her God—she took the pure white Host with one little corner of the spotless handkerchief—she placed it upon the tongue of the radiant Granny. Then she fell upon her knees at the bedside and cried as though her heart would break—she knew not why.

When she lifted her head Granny was with holy God in eternity.

* * * *

"Tell Us Another!"

Half an hour later Lucy O'Donnell knelt weeping at the parish priest's feet, down in the village.

"Father," she sobbed, "Granny was dying and I feared it would be too late had I come to you—and—and I dared not leave Jesus alone by the wayside—and I thought"

The poor girl was overcome with emotion. What had she done! She had carried, she had touched her great God! The thought of the sacredness of it all rolled over her soul like a flood. "Father, forgive me. . . . I confess to you if I did any wrong. . . . I"

"Child," said the priest in a voice trembling with feeling, "dear child favored of God, you did no wrong. It was one of God's wonderful ways."

The Face of God



ONCE upon a time a dear old saint lay dying. As he looked back over the past he saw how for years and years he had been trying to serve God faithfully and well. Even from the earliest days of his youth he had been devout to Jesus and Mary. Indeed, to behold them face to face had ever been the yearning desire of his heart.

Now he lay dying. Yes; he knew full well what death means. He knew that it is the separation, often violent, of body from soul; that it is the end of time and things temporal; that it is the beginning of life everlasting and things eternal; that it means to forsake and to be forsaken by all. He knew all this, but he never thought of it that day; he thought of death only as a sweet going home to Jesus, as the moment in which he should see his good, good God face to face.

All expectant he lay there waiting for the happy moment when the day should break and the shadows flee away. All of a sudden, in a soft glow of light at the foot of his bed, he saw our Blessed Lady. She

The Crown of Life Everlasting

was surpassingly fair, radiant beyond description, a figure of dazzling beauty. Her beautiful, loose maiden hair flowed over her shoulders. A crown of rarest gems shone softly on her brow. Richest robes of white and blue enveloped her graceful form. In her arms she held—a Baby.

What did the Babe look like? I could not tell you. Nor could the saint have done so just then. For the face was covered with folds of heavenly silk.

“O my Mother,” the saint pleaded, his heart going out in longing love. “Show the face of the Babe to me!”

The Mother-Maid bent low and in whispered accents of adoring love uttered a gentle word.

And what happened? The Babe moved a little hand and drew the silken folds from His face.

The saint gazed upon it; and the moment he gazed upon it he was in heaven. He was dead. For that is what it means to die: to look upon the face of God!

The Crown of Life Everlasting

LIFE is made up of one little thing after the other, of things that we do and things that we suffer. Now, God knows everything; so He also knows just what we are going to do, just how much we are going to suffer. When we have finished with that, what then? Well, that's the object of this tiny story.

There once was a man who lived a very good, pious life, a life made up mostly of prayer and mortification and entirely, of course, of goodness. For he was a saint, you see.

Now, we know it is pretty hard to be good always, for a long, long time. We get tired of it, because our poor, poor nature has a leaning to be bad, an inclination to evil. This, as you remember from your catechism, is one of the effects of original sin. To be good

"Tell Us Another!"

we have always to do a little fighting: we have to fight that strange urge not to be good, to be naughty, wicked. We have to pray even when we don't feel like it; we have to be kind and polite even when we feel like being spitefully spunky; and so on down the whole list. Well, to come back to the story, this saint had been good for over ninety long years.

Then one day he had a fair vision. He saw some angels making a beautiful crown out of all kinds of diamonds and precious stones. So splendid was the coronet that he simply couldn't keep his eyes off it.

"Whose crown is that, please?" he asked eagerly.

"Oh," said one of the angels in a voice like music, "that is your crown of life everlasting."

"And when will it be finished?" asked the saint, scarcely able to restrain his joy.

And, oh! how significant, true, and consoling was the answer. It is the same answer I give to you if you ask me when your crown of everlasting life will be finished. Said the angel: "When you will have done and suffered all that God has designed for you. Then it will be finished; then God will take you home—to heaven—to crown you."

Yes; the crown must be won for heaven, dear, in the battlefield of life!

The Very Greatest Act of Love

NOW, dearest, I am going to tell you the sweetest story to be found in the whole wide world. Oh, yes; you have heard it often. Of course you have! But it never grows old; it never loses its charm. It's about the greatest act of love, about the greatest gift that was ever given to man, about the Holy Eucharist. You know what the Holy Eucharist is. Surely you do! If I were to ask you, you would tell me at once that it is the dear Sacrament which contains the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine.

You have many times heard how much Jesus loves us. You know how Adam and Eve, our first parents, shut the gates of heaven by their disobedience, so that no one could get in. When the loving Savior saw this He was moved with compassion. He made up His mind to open those heavenly gates again. So He became Man. He came down to the earth, was born at Bethlehem of the Blessed Virgin Mary, lived at Nazareth, spent three years among the people, and then suffered and died upon the cross. You see, His Father had told Him that if He would do all this He would reopen for us the gates of heaven. So He came and did it. Wasn't that good of Him? Could any act of love be greater?

Yes; there was something greater still. And Jesus, Whose love for us, His dear children, is infinite, did that something more sublime. It was not enough for Him to die for us. True, He wanted to ascend to heaven and open its gates for us, but at the same time He wished to remain with us on earth, too; for it is His delight to be with the children of men. So He instituted the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar in order that, though leaving us, He might yet remain in our midst and give Himself often to each one of us.

"Tell Us Another!"

This is the very greatest act of love. Only God could have thought of anything like it.

It was on the night before He died, at the Last Supper, that Jesus gave us the priceless gift of His own sweet Self. It happened in Jerusalem, in an upper chamber. The twelve Apostles were with Him. Imagine you see the room, with its lofty ceiling, its slender columns, its oriental tapestry. The Savior is seated at the table; around Him are the twelve. His garments are very poor, like those of the Apostles. But oh! His face is so beautiful, so full of love. An atmosphere of infinite tenderness seems to surround Him. A heavenly gentleness fills the room.

And now Jesus takes bread in His holy and adorable hands; He raises His eyes to heaven; He blesses the bread, breaks it, and gives it to His expectant Apostles. And oh! how sweet are the words that fall from His divine lips. "Take ye and eat," He says. "This is My Body." Then He takes the wine and blesses it and gives it to them. And again sacred words break the hallowed stillness of that supper room. "Drink ye all of this," He says. "This is My Blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of Me." Jesus has instituted the Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, the Holy Mass. He has ordained His Apostles priests.

Look at those happy Apostles. They are kneeling around Him. They have received their First Holy Communion. What peace, what joy, what heavenly bliss fills their hearts! They had been filled with sadness at the thought that He would leave them; but now they know that He will abide with them forever; for He has instituted the Blessed Sacrament. It is the very greatest act of love.

Dare we, then, doubt the love of Christ for each one of us? Never! We must trust Him absolutely; we must come often to rest confidently in His Eucharistic arms. Jesus once said to a holy soul: "It is certain that a hundred sins offend Me more than one

Crowning Mother With Roses

alone ; but if this single sin is distrust of Me, it wounds My heart more than the hundred others, because distrust wounds My Heart to its innermost core. I love men so much !”

Crowning Mother With Roses



OF COURSE, I've told it often. But it won't hurt one tiny little bit to tell it over again. It? What? Why, the beautiful legend about the rosary. Don't you remember?

Once upon a time a saintly Sister was walking slowly to and fro in a convent garden. Oh, it was so quiet there and so lovely! Flowers bloomed on both sides of the graveled walk. The sweetest odors filled the balmy air. Birds sang softly.

But the Sister was praying.

What was she praying? Hail Marys fell from her lips. Again and again the dear greeting of the “Ave” was given by this consecrated bride of Christ to Christ's blessed Mother, the spotless Virgin of virgins. All of a sudden Our Lady appeared before the Sister. And then—what do you think happened then? Each Hail Mary that fell from the Sister's lips became a beautiful rose! And as the roses dropped on Mary's heart, she took them up and wove them into a fragrant crown. When the crown was finished angel hands placed it on Mary's soft, beautiful maiden hair.

Now, do you know what those Hail Marys were that the Sister was saying? Ah, they were the rosary. They crowned Mary with a crown of the roses she likes best of all. The word “rosary,” you know, comes from the Latin word “rosarium,” which means a place planted with roses, a rose garden.

First we'll call that holy nun Sister Rose. Then we'll say to darling Mary, “Mother, we'll crown you often with roses, just as Sister Rose did.”

“Queen of the most holy rosary, pray for us!”

The Friend Who is With Us Always



ONCE upon a time a good Sister who lived in the convent with St. Teresa said to her, "Oh, my dear mother, how I would liked to have lived in Palestine in Our Lord's time! How I would like to have looked upon His beautiful face and listened to the music of His heavenly voice! Oh, I am sure that, could I have been with Him there I would have become a saint!"

"But, dear Sister," the Saint answered sweetly and wisely, "you could not have been with Him every day. Martha and Mary were with Him only from time to time, you know. But now you can really be with Him every day; you may speak with Him whenever you like; for He is with us day and night, year in and year out, in the Blessed Sacrament. Surely, we are more favored than were the people of Palestine, even though we do not see Him visibly present."

Then the good Sister saw what a mistake she had made. She was ever after happy in the presence of Jesus.

I remember there was a little English boy who had learned the lesson of the Real Presence exceedingly well. He had heard that Jesus was present in the Blessed Sacrament, and he believed it with his whole little mind and loved Him for it with his whole heart.

One day he came to church all alone to ask the Savior for something. He entered the sanctuary, climbed onto the altar, and kneeling at the little tabernacle door he rapped gently and asked, "Are You there, Jesus? They told me often You are in this little house here."

No answer came. "Jesus must be asleep," he murmured. "I will quietly awake Him."

Again he rapped. "Are You there, Jesus? Oh, speak to me! I believe in You and I love You with my whole heart!"

The Friend Who is With Us Always

Then Our Lord could no longer resist the touching plea of this innocent little soul. A voice came from the tabernacle, "Yes; I am here, dear child. My love for you keeps Me here always. What can I do for you today, My little brother?"

"O Jesus," sobbed the boy, delighted that he had been heard, "my father is not a good man. Make him good, and he will serve and love You."

And the Prisoner of Love answered, "Dear child, do not weep; I will grant your prayer."

And, sure enough, the next day that father went to church, made a good confession, received Holy Communion, and was ever afterwards a model Catholic.

Oh, how our dearest Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament loves us! How ardently He desires us to come to Him! One day He said, "Oh, if men knew how I love them and how My Heart rejoices when they believe in My love. They believe in it too little, too little!"

Hide Nothing from the Savior!

HAVE you ever seen a crystal vase full of clear, pure water? What a fine sight it really is! And one can see through it from the top and from the sides—right through to the bottom!

Now, that's the way our souls should be in the sight of God—as open as the light of day. We must never hide anything from Jesus! Maybe it would be better to say we must never *try* to do so; for Jesus is God, and God knows and sees everything, anyhow. We should remember this especially when going to confession. Make a clean breast of it; you are only saying to God through His priest what God already knows. Don't try to fool the Lord; you can't do it; you'll only fool yourself and make yourself miserable. Don't do even such little things as the one it is said St. Peter did.

What did he do? Well, one day, so the legend tells us, St. Peter and Our Lord were walking through the country of Palestine. It was a hot day. The journey was fatiguing. They had been a long time without anything to eat, so that Peter was simply famishing. He knew that the Lord must be hungry, too; but he also knew his Master's power of endurance; Jesus liked to suffer, and He never complained.

Finally Peter could stand it no longer, so he blurted out: "Master, I am starving; I must have something to eat!"

"Surely, Peter; you ought to have something to eat—you must be so hungry," said Our Lord, always full of compassion towards others. "Go down this road for some distance and you will find a house. There they will give you bread."

Peter went. Of course, everything was just as Our Lord had said. He found the cottage and a woman just baking little loaves of bread. He asked for a loaf, which was gladly given him. Then, thinking of

What a Promise!

his waiting Master and how hungry He must also be, he begged a loaf for Him, too.

"Surely," said the kind-hearted housewife. "And take this third loaf also; for you may still need it to satisfy your hunger."

With many thanks, Peter returned to the Savior. On his way back, however, he said to himself, "I'll hide this third loaf and eat it later on, lest I get so frightfully hungry again; for the Master will go on and on without complaining of His hunger." He accordingly put the loaf under his arm so that it was covered by his mantle.

He found the Lord waiting. They sat down together and each ate his little loaf of bread. (I suppose it was merely a roll.) Then Jesus said: "How good the Father is, Who satisfies our hunger and gives us even more than we need! Let us thank Him with outstretched arms."

With a guilty start and in puzzled embarrassment, St. Peter thought of the loaf under his arm. But there was no help for it. He extended his arms; the loaf dropped to the ground. The Savior did not seem to notice it.

How ashamed Peter was! All that day he was uneasy and in the evening he could stand it no longer. So he fell at the Lord's feet and told Him everything. Then he was happy again. For Jesus did not scold. He never does.

What a Promise!

IT WAS July 16, 1251. The world was full of wicked people then, as it is now, always was, and always will be—until the end comes. And some of those evil-minded people were persecuting the Carmelite Order most violently. Oh, no; that's nothing surprising; as the world hated and persecuted Christ, so it will hate and persecute

"Tell Us Another!"

His Church and the members thereof; for the disciple is not above the Master.

Well, on that particular sixteenth day of July the Blessed Simon Stock, General of the Carmelites, was kneeling in prayer at Cambridge Convent, England. With sighs and tears he besought the Blessed Mother of God to watch over her children, the children of Carmel. I suppose in his fervent supplications he reminded her of how the first chapel ever built in her honor was that erected on Mount Carmel, the dwelling place of the Prophet Elias and his disciples; how the beginnings of the Order of which he was the head and which was now so cruelly persecuted extended back to that time and place; how—

But suddenly as he knelt there in prayer the Immaculate Virgin herself appeared before him in all her dazzling beauty. Do you remember the saint who prayed that he might see Mary, and how when he saw her fell down as one dead? He could not look upon such splendor with mortal eyes. I wonder what Blessed Simon did.

Our Lady did not say much. But oh! how full of consolation are the words with which she did address him. Handing the enraptured Carmelite a scapular, she said: "Receive, my dear son, this scapular of your Order, in token of the privilege I have obtained for you and for the children of Carmel. He who at his death shall be found clothed in this habit shall be preserved from eternal flames. It is a sign of salvation, a safeguard in time of danger, and a pledge of special protection."

Then she disappeared. "For you and for the children of Carmel." Have you been enrolled in the Brown Scapular? Oh joy! Then also you are a child of Carmel.

Why Did He Whistle the Merry Tune?



ONE DAY a priest, walking down a street in a certain city, passed a place where workmen were building a new house. Just as he went by one of the masons grumbled to a fellow workman: "Those priests have a fine time—nothing to do but take walks!"

The good Father, who had greeted the workmen with a kind smile, overheard this remark and paused.

"My friend," he said, addressing the mason, "could you come with me for the rest of the day? Your pay will be a dollar an hour."

"Where are you going?" asked the mason.

"Well, first I must call upon a woman who has been suffering from loathsome boils and ulcers for the last two years."

"And then?"

"Then I'll have to visit a man who has the black smallpox and is near death."

"And then?" continued the workman.

"Then I must call on a lady who, according to all indications, has the scarlet fever."

"And then?"

"Then, about half-past three I'll have to get into the confessional, which I will not leave until ten o'clock."

Now, the mason did not like the evil-smelling sick-rooms of persons suffering from cancer and such like things; he had about equal respect for smallpox and scarlet fever; and as for confessional—it never had been a favorite place of his. He refused the offer. With a smile the priest passed on.

Turning to his work, the mason continued it in a far better spirit—a wiser man.

Indeed, he began to whistle a merry tune as he hammered and fitted away. Why?

The Great Secret

YES; JOHN had finished high school and was about to go to college. It was a great day for the ambitious young man, who was trying to climb the shaky ladder of success in an educational way. There was an all-round shaking of hands, a few proud, happy tears, and the youth prepared to enter the waiting car that was to take him to the higher institution of learning.

But first his father took him aside and said: "John, if you succeed at college you will graduate there at the age of twenty-one. Return home to me then and I will tell you something of great importance, a thing which young men of age must know."

The years passed rapidly. John led his classes in everything. And always there was in his mind the great, the all-important secret that was to be revealed to him after a successful graduation day. That day came, as all days will come, and shortly afterwards the young college man was within the family circle once again.

As soon as the first happy greetings were over, John took his father aside and eagerly reminded him of the promised revelation.

"My son," said the father solemnly, "I did indeed promise to tell you the great secret; but I really do think it would be better to have mother tell you. Yes; I believe it is your mother's privilege and duty. Go to her."

John went to mother. "Mother," he said, "father promised me that at the age of twenty-one, if I graduated from college with honor, he would tell me a secret of utmost importance. But now he sends me to you, saying that it is really your privilege and your duty to reveal it to me. What is it, mother?"

"You should indeed know, my boy," the mother replied. "But since father would not tell you, I really do

The Great Secret

not think I am under obligations to do so. I think you ought to go to grandfather; he can best make the matter known to you."

Disappointed, indeed, but more eager and expectant than ever, John sought out his grandfather and said: "Grandpa, father promised to reveal some important information to me after my graduation, but now he has sent me to mother for the secret, and mother has sent me to you. What is it that I should know?"

Grandfather looked important, but doubtful. After a moment's thought he said: "Well, John, if your father and mother do not think it their province to tell you, I do not exactly see why I should venture to do so. Go to your grandmother; she can best impart the necessary knowledge to you."

Bubbling over with anxious excitement, the young man soon found grandmother alone. "Grandma," he said, "there is something of vast importance that must be told me now that I am of age. But father sent me to mother, mother sent me to grandfather, and now grandfather sends me to you. What is it, grandma dear?"

Grandmother looked over her glasses wisely. "John," she said, "since neither your father nor mother nor grandfather would tell you, I cannot see just why I should do so. But it is a thing you should know, so I suppose the duty devolves upon me. Come in here where we can be more alone."

She took him into her bedroom and mysteriously closed the door. She looked into the closet and under the bed, lest there be someone listening there.

Then she bent down and whispered into his ear, "John, there is no such thing as Santa Claus."

The Shepherd Boy

SHAMAR was a little shepherd boy who lived in Palestine at the time when Our Lord was born as a little Babe at Bethlehem, almost two thousand years ago! Poor little Shamar! Why poor? Oh, because he was blind.

One night—it was the first Christmas night—he heard a heavenly voice speaking mysterious words to the shepherds with whom he was camping on the plains near the ancient city of David. There were words about a Child, Christ the King, about tidings of great joy, and then some singing such as he had never heard before—singing the tender sweetness of which thrilled him through and through. Then there had been excited talk among the shepherds tenting there and nearly all of them had hastened away. Shamar wondered.

Early in the morning, however, they all returned, and Shamar had to wonder no longer. The other shepherd boys gathered round him and eagerly told him what they had heard and seen. “Angels appeared to us in a glow of light,” they said, “and told us of the new-born King—Who is Christ the Lord, the long-expected Messiah. They said we would find Him in a stable at Bethlehem, and we hastened thither. And lo! what a lovely sight! There in a poor stable-cave on a hillside we found the Babe with His foster-father and His Mother. He was lying on the straw in the manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes; and His Mother, the sweetest, dearest Lady in the world, was watching over Him so tenderly. His foster-father, Joseph, was kneeling there. An ox and an ass were in the stable, looking on. The Babe was so beautiful we could not take our eyes off Him. He was cold, though, and suffering. Still, He looked at us and smiled and stretched out His little hands. He wanted us to come to Him—and oh! His Mother let us kiss Him!” And

The Shepherd Boy

all that morning they spoke of nothing but the Babe, the Babe, the Babe. They were going to see Him again that afternoon.

"Oh, do take me with you!" Shamar cried. "I, too, want to visit the little King. Lead me by the hand—please do!"

"But why should you go?" one of the boys, Isaac, asked him. "What will you do there? You are blind; you cannot see." And he would not offer to take him.

Now, Shamar had a little pet lamb with fleece as white as snow and soft as down, which followed and led him around everywhere. He loved that tiny lamb more than anything else in the world; it was the best friend he had on earth. Isaac had often asked for the lamb, but he would never give it to him. Now, however, he wanted to see the Babe at Bethlehem so badly that he said, "Isaac, if you take me along to the stable, to the Babe, I will give you my little lamb." This the boy gladly agreed to; it was a great bargain.

So that afternoon Isaac took Shamar by the hand and led him along to the stable on the hillside. And he took the little lamb, too. He was going to give it away to the new-born King. It would be such a nice present.

They entered the poor, rough cave. With eyes that could not see, Shamar looked towards the place where the Babe lay on the straw. Then from his breast he took his shepherd's flute and began to play his very best pieces for Bethlehem's Boy.

And when Jesus heard the lovely music He looked towards the poor blind shepherd boy and smiled.

That smile was a ray of heavenly sunshine to the lad's darkened eyes. It gave him back his sight and he saw—saw the Child and His Mother and dear St. Joseph, and the ox and the ass, and everything, as his comrades had told him.

And kneeling down he adored the Babe Who had restored his sight to reward him for his boyish goodness of heart. And he kissed the little hands stretched out to bless him.

The Christmas Kiss

THE TIME? It was the morning of the day before Christmas. The place? Africa. The people? A group of dark-skinned children gathered round Sister in the little Catholic school near the mission church. Everybody was so busy getting ready for Christmas! There were the altars to be decorated, the crib to be arranged, and a thousand and one other things to be done. The children helped Sister as only little people can help at such a blessed time.

The dinner hour drew near. Then Sister said, "Go home now, darlings, and get your dinner. And remember, each one is going to give the Christ-Child a present this afternoon, by bringing something to help decorate crib or church or altar."

Away they went, about fifteen of them, chatting eagerly and planning happily about what they should bring the Savior in the afternoon. Only one tiny girl, Naga, a poor little orphan that was staying at the mission, was not happy. She had no pennies to buy decorations with; she had not even flowers to give. But as Naga's big black eyes watched the other children disappear, a look of joy suddenly sprang into her face—and she was unhappy no longer. She knew what she would do!

Sister noticed with joy that Naga was much more helpful and happy than usual that afternoon. The girl even lovingly helped the other children arrange their flowers and candles and similar gifts; she shared in their delight, though she had nothing to give herself. What did I say? She had nothing to give? Oh, yes, she had! In her heart she knew all the while just what she would give—and how.

Now, late in the afternoon Sister began to bake the altar breads for the coming day. Naga, of course, always helped—she loved that work more than any other.

The Christmas Kiss

First Sister baked the large host for the Mass and placed it on a clean white cloth. Then she baked the smaller hosts for Holy Communion.

But what was Naga doing back there? Sister turned around just in time to see her reverently take the large host in both her little hands and give it a long, sweet, lingering kiss.

"Why, Naga!" she exclaimed. "What are you doing? Didn't I tell you often that the unconsecrated host is only a little wafer of bread? It is not Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament until, during Mass, at the altar, the priest speaks over it the sacred words, 'This is My Body.'"

"O Sister, I know. But it is my Christmas gift to Jesus, my Christmas kiss. I have nothing else to give Him, so I placed it upon the host in order that when He comes tomorrow He may find it there. Did I do wrong, Sister?" And she gazed into Sister's face in innocent pleading.

"No, no," said Sister gently, as she lovingly drew the little darky girl's head to her breast, "you did no wrong, darling. He will surely find it there."

The next morning when the priest raised the Sacred Host aloft at the elevation, during the beautiful Christmas Mass, one little girl in church looked upon It with the love-light of heaven in her eyes. She knew He had found it.

Found it? What? Why, Naga's Christmas kiss!

"Honor to Whom Honor is Due"



F INSPIRING stories about the Blessed Sacrament there is no end. And why should it not be so? It is the wonder of wonders, this dear Sacrament in which Jesus Christ is whole and entire under the form of bread and under the form of wine.

I could tell you today of how Duke Wittekind, in the time of Charlemagne, while he was assisting at Christian worship with the rest of the army, saw a priest distribute Holy Communion. But instead of seeing the appearances of bread, the Duke beheld a beautiful Babe in the priest's hand.

Or I could tell you of how a great and pious ruler, King Ferdinand II, who occupied the German throne at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, once showed his profound respect for the Holy Eucharist by dismounting from his horse and humbly accompanying a priest who was carrying Jesus to a sick man. The Emperor, seeing that the man was very poor, gave him a liberal gift of money before he departed. Then the priest said to the sick one, "Dear friend, you surely have reason to congratulate yourself; for today two kings have honored you with a visit, the King of kings and one who is His worthy representative on earth, our own beloved monarch."

But I am going to tell you about an officer in the army who was truly a noble man. He thought the way we all ought to think. He knew that after the sacred words of consecration pronounced by the priest the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of our Lord, only the appearance of bread and wine remaining, that is, the figure, the color, the taste, and whatever appears to the senses. This he knew; so in the tiny white Host he really saw the great God, hidden in humble guise.

"Honor to Whom Honor is Due"

Well, one day he had laid aside his uniform and was out taking a walk, dressed in civilian's clothes, when he met a priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the sick. What did he do? He knelt right down where he was and remained kneeling until the priest had passed.

Now, his brother officers heard of this, and at supper that evening there was an interesting discussion.

"It is not becoming for an officer of his Majesty's army to be seen kneeling down in the public street," one of his fellows said.

"Just let me ask you a question," returned the pious officer. "If you were to meet the King on the street dressed as an ordinary gentleman, without his royal robes, would you not greet him with all the respect that is his due?"

"I surely would," replied the other. "He is King and remains King, no matter what garments he chooses to wear. That stands to reason."

"Exactly!" exclaimed the officer. "And that is precisely what I did. I met the King of kings disguised under the appearances of bread, dressed, as it were, in the garb of a lowly creature of His. Why, I would have been a miserable coward had I not shown to the Divine Majesty the respect that is His due. And I would have been thrice miserable had I omitted those exterior tokens for fear of being ridiculed and laughed at and talked about by men."

Not another word was said. The argument was convincing. It silenced every tongue.

In our time and country the Blessed Sacrament is rarely carried publicly. But how often Catholics meet a priest whom they know to be carrying Jesus, and they haven't piety enough—or are actually ashamed—to remove their hats or make some other little exterior sign of adoration.

Isn't it a shame!

"I Am Not Poor!"

IT seems that nobody really likes to be poor, except those who are poor for Jesus' sake; and they like it because it makes them more like Him. Then, too, of course, in Him they have all riches. But not only they; all of us have all riches in Him, especially in Holy Communion. If we have Jesus, you know, we have God; and in God we have everything.

I remember there was a boy living near Vienna some time ago whose name was Godfrey. But he could no longer go to church and school; he could no longer run about in the free, fresh air with his companions; he was sick, very sick. And he would never get well again, the doctors had said. Poor little fellow!

Poor little fellow? I should say not! Listen. Do you hear the tinkling of that little bell? It announces the coming of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. God's priest is bringing Godfrey Holy Communion, as *Viatikum*.

With eyes full of heavenly happiness the suffering boy receives His great God, the gentle Savior, Jesus. Then he closes his eyes in quiet, heartfelt prayer. He is one with God, his all. For more intimate is the union between the soul and Jesus in Holy Communion than that of two pieces of wax that have been melted together.

Some time later his mother arrived. She had been hastily called from far away, for her Godfrey was at a boarding school. With a mother's soft touch she placed her hand on the hot feverish brow of her darling boy, now dying—but dying in Jesus' arms, where we all want to die. "My poor, poor boy!" the mother sobbed with breaking heart.

Godfrey heard. He opened his eyes. There was in them the light of that other and better world for which we live.

"O mother dear," he whispered contentedly, "I am not poor. I am rich—O so rich! Mother, I have Jesus!"

“Now Dost Thou Dismiss Thy Servant,
O Lord, in Peace”

VES; February the second is Candlemas Day. How many beautiful thoughts we find in the presentation of Our Lord in the Temple at Jerusalem! But, do you know, I think the nicest part of the picture is the holy old man, Simeon, holding the Infant Jesus in his arms and exclaiming in joy: “O Lord, now dismiss Thy servant in peace.”

That is what a missionary was thinking about over in Africa, down in the hot regions of Sudan, south of Egypt. He had planted the cross there, had built a little house beside it, and started a small garden. But it was uphill work trying to convert the dark-skinned natives around him. They were cold and indifferent.

So one day he sat thinking of holy Simeon's words, “My eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles.” Oh, when, thought the priest, would those pagans, sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, see this light?

He was disturbed in his reverie by the sound of approaching footsteps. He looked up. An old, white-haired Moor, bent with age, was drawing near. Pausing before the missionary, he asked eagerly: “Are you a Christian?”

“Yes,” answered the priest, “I am a Christian.”

“And what do the Christians believe?” continued the negro anxiously.

“We believe in one God in three divine Persons; we hope in this God; we love Him; we serve Him. In that way we can be saved.”

“But do you not venerate the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God?”

“Yes; indeed, we do,” said the missionary, “and—”

“O joy!” exclaimed the old man, tears coursing

"Tell Us Another!"

down his rugged cheeks; "you are indeed a bringer of good tidings to me. Long have I sought and now I have found!"

Thereupon he told the priest how he had formerly lived in a land to the north; how he had longed to find the one true God; how one day a white man had come preaching a new religion and bringing medicines, especially for children; how he had been able to stay only three days, and how on departing he had said encouragingly to the Moor: "God will reveal Himself to you. Some day you will meet a Christian missionary. But do not listen to him, do not believe him, unless he teaches the veneration of the Blessed Virgin."

"And now I have found you!" cried the happy old man. "For believing in the one true God I was deprived of my vast estates and banished from my home. I am a poor, wandering outcast now, but I have found the true religion. Baptize me that I may die in peace."

But the missionary gave him instructions for three weeks longer, though the old negro really knew much about our holy faith, being able to read and having been given a catechism and a prayerbook by the white teacher of his home days.

The day of his baptism came. And then? Then came the happy day of his First Communion. He received his Jesus into his heart. Wasn't he as happy as holy Simeon who held Bethlehem's Babe in his arms in Jerusalem? Oh, he was even more favored; he had Him in his heart!

Honor the King!

I SN'T it sweetly true? The longer we think of the Blessed Sacrament the more our hearts seem to melt in tenderness and love. And oh! how it hurts us when others make fun of this most sacred and consoling mystery of our holy religion! What a dreadful sin that is!

In 1807, in a village in Prussia, there lived a very wicked man. He was so bad that on the fifth of January that year he invited twelve companions just as wicked as himself to dinner. When they were all seated at table the wretch—it is too terrible to think about!—took bread and wine and mockingly pronounced over them the words of consecration. Then, still continuing the impious blasphemy, he distributed the bread and wine to his fellows. When his turn came to partake of it a deadly faintness took possession of him, a horid blackness obscured his sight, and he dropped his head on the table—dead! God's punishment of the scoffer was swift and awful. His body was buried the next day—outside the cemetery wall, as though it were the body of a beast. And his soul? Alas! . . .

But let's turn away from this disgusting sight. Let's breathe a prayer of love and reparation and think of some noble act. You have heard of Count Rudolph, haven't you, and of how he one day gave his horse to a priest? Let me tell you about it again.

Count Rudolph was out hunting one day with a great number of attendants. Suddenly the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle of a little bell fell on his ears. He looked around and saw a priest passing with the Blessed Sacrament. It was a public sick call. Immediately the Count dismounted from his horse and knelt in adoration upon the ground. Then he accompanied his Eucharistic King.

Now, it happened that there was a little brook to be

"Tell Us Another!"

crossed. But the plank that had served as a bridge had been washed away. So the priest prepared to wade over. When the nobleman saw this he hastened forward, and obliged the priest to mount his own beautiful hunting horse and thus cross the streamlet and proceed to his destination.

The next day the priest brought the horse back to the Count. He would not accept it. "No," he said to the clergyman, "I will never again ride the steed that has had the honor of carrying my Creator and my Lord; keep it for yourself and employ it in God's service."

Deeply moved at this evidence of faith, the priest uttered these prophetic words. "Be assured that the Most High will not fail to reward this generous act of yours; He will grant high earthly honors to you and your posterity."

And so it was. The pious Count was elected Emperor of Germany in 1273; he was the founder of the Austrian imperial dynasty.

God does not suffer Himself to be outdone in generosity. Would you be honored? Then honor the Eucharistic King!

Giving Himself

FIRST I must tell you that last Holy Thursday there was a beautiful, beautiful procession of the Blessed Sacrament in a neat little church somewhere—I won't tell where! The children were all there, of course, and oh! how pure and lovely the girlyies were in their white dresses and clinging veils, with their little baskets of flowers. But what am I saying! I'm mixing things up again! There were no baskets and no flowers that day; I'm thinking of the glorious feast of Corpus Christi, soon to be here, and the way it's celebrated round home, with a long procession winding through the highways and byways of the rustic village and the Lord Jesus carried under a magnificent canopy over the flower-strewn paths. Oh! "Praised be the most Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament!"

Now, when I see such solemn processions I always think of Holy Communion, in which God Himself comes into our hearts and transforms us into Himself. And when I think of Holy Communion I always think of so many other things, too: of how an angel once came to give Holy Communion to a youthful saint (I wonder who can tell me which saint); of how Jesus gave First Holy Communion to His Apostles; of how, with His own divine hands, He has often given Himself to great saints since that time.

Yes; that's just what He has done. Most beautiful of beautiful thoughts! So, for instance, we know that at least three different times the Divine Giver gave Himself to St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, a Carmelite Sister, who lived in the sixteenth century.

She was nineteen years old and was still in the novitiate when one day, Maundy Thursday, 1585, as she knelt in prayer, meditating on the Last Supper, on the institution of the Holy Eucharist, the Sisters suddenly saw her act as though about to receive Holy

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Communion. She opened her mouth reverently, closed it again, and then bowed her head on her folded hands. She was wrapt in ecstasy. Afterwards she told the Sisters that the Divine Savior in person, dressed in purest white, had given her Himself in Holy Communion. What a blessed privilege! Can you guess what her prayer was immediately after that wonderful Communion? All the Sisters heard the first part. It was, "My Beloved in white and ruddy! He is come into my heart! Enlarge my heart that it may exclude every creature in order that it may be united to Thy Flesh and Thy Blood!" This same thrilling thing happened once more that year and again on Maundy Thursday, 1592.

We marvel, don't we? We wonder! And yet, Jesus really gives us Himself in every Holy Communion. "But," you say, "by the hands of the priest." Surely; still, haven't you been told so often that the priest at the altar is another Christ, that he takes the place of Christ, Who is invisibly present?

Oh, no matter how we look at it, Jesus does give us Himself in Holy Communion;—it is happily true! Let's let Him do it often!

Mortal Sin

WELL, yes;—maybe I have told this story often; but I'm going to tell it again. And if any little—or big—story-reader should object, I beg of such a one's goodness to remember that when telling it here I'm telling it to at least a hundred thousand more!

Once upon a time there lived in far-away France, near the city of Paris, a man who had a most peculiar, not to say repulsive, trade. He made his living by catching adders,—poisonous little snakes, you know—so poisonous that their bite is simply deadly, at least the bite of the kind this fellow was after. Why did he catch them? Oh, he sold them to men that made drugs and medicines. Anybody can guess what for. And how did he catch them? Now, don't get so curious! Maybe it was with a forked stick, and maybe it was in some other way.

Anyhow, one day he caught just one hundred and seventeen of the little vipers. It was a great catch. With a smile of satisfaction on his face he brought them home and placed them into a barrel in his little shanty. (The shanty only had one room, which served as bedroom, dining room, living room, and every other kind of room.) He placed a cover on the barrel and went to bed, so absolutely satisfied with himself and the whole world that he was soon fast asleep.

Then it happened. There must have been a crack or something in the cover of the barrel, or else the restless little venomous serpents wriggled about so much that they shoved the cover off—and got out! Now, it was rather cold in the room and those adders liked nice warm, cozy places; and the warmest, coziest place in that room was the bed in which the man that caught them was dreaming pleasant dreams. So the one hundred and seventeen wriggled their way across the floor and wriggled their way into the bed. Some wound themselves around the man's arms; others coiled their slimy lengths about his neck; still others

"Tell Us Another!"

twisted themselves around his legs. What frightful position to be in! Had he moved the least bit each one of the vipers would have sunk its deadly fangs into his flesh, and he would have died in agony. Luckily, however, he was a quiet and a sound sleeper.

Luckily, too, he awoke as quietly as he had slept. And—O horrors! He saw at a glance what terrible danger he was in. He grasped the situation at once: the adders had escaped and were his unwelcome bed-fellows! He paled—but he did not make the move that would have meant death. He lay quiet, thinking tensely.

Just then there was a rap at the door. Oh, yes! An old friend was to call on him that morning.

"Do not enter!" he called in a low, steady voice; "but go and get a basin of warm milk and then come in as softly as you can and place it in the center of the floor here. Then go out again as quietly as you came and close the door. Don't ask any questions! If you value my life do just as I tell you!"

The old friend obeyed; he surmised what had happened. He brought the warm milk, placed it in the center of the room, and noiselessly withdrew.

Now, those particular adders were especially fond of nice warm milk. They smelled it at once, of course, and, being hungry after their warm night's rest, one by one the slimy one hundred and seventeen slipped out of the bed and wriggled over to the milk pan.

Whereupon the old hunter of adders jumped up, seized an axe, and put an end to the whole detestable brood. Then he quit hunting adders.

And here, in plain words, is what the story teaches. The adders are mortal sin. As the adders, coiled round the man's body, so mortal sin, when in the soul, is frightfully deadly. As the adders with their poisonous fangs would have struck to kill at the slightest accidental move, even so, given an accident or any sudden death or death without reconciliation to God, mortal sin will kill the soul in the wink of an eye. Which death of the soul is burning hell fire for all eternity!

He is Always There

DID you ever have the Forty Hours in your church? What a time of grace that is for a parish! For three whole days, or, in smaller places, for at least one, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is publicly enthroned on the altar in the golden monstrance, surrounded by glowing lights and fragrant flowers and receiving the adoration of the people.

But are the people always there? Only too often the church is so empty! Everybody leaves it to everybody else, and hence dear Jesus is sometimes very, very much alone. But I remember one beautiful church which, though it was not always *full* of people—for that can hardly be—was full of prayer and song from morning to night, thanks to the pious children and their Sister-teachers.

Now, at Blairsville, Pa., in the church of Sts. Simon and Jude, the Eucharistic Savior worked a miracle to show that He is in the Blessed Sacrament, loving us, expecting us, especially during the Forty Hours. In that church the Devotion opened on June 25, 1920. But, sad to say, very few people came. The church was nearly always empty. How strange that is. Still the love of Jesus knows no repulse. He is never weary of waiting for us. In this particular case He actually showed Himself in the Host in order to get His careless people to care for Him.

It happened thus: On June 27, at the closing Mass, one of the altar boys, dear to Jesus, came to the priest and said with happy, wondering eyes: "O Father, come and see the Child Jesus!"

The priest went; and to his astonishment and holy delight he saw clearly a figure of the Infant Savior in the Host. Soon some of the people saw it also; and before long the church was crowded with adorers, both Catholics and Protestants; and it was so crowded during every remaining hour of the day.

"Tell Us Another!"

How good Jesus is! But we should not want such miracles; we should remember that He said, "Blessed are they who believe and see not." He is always in the Blessed Sacrament, even though we do not see Him.

When in the Eucharistic presence, let's always let what the Church calls *appearances* fade away, as it were, and let's always see just Jesus there, His divinest, dearest, living Self. Oh, how thrilling are those words of Eternal Truth, "*This is My Body!*"

The Reason Why

THERE was a beautiful fresh-water spring down in the little valley behind the house. So one day mother sent Agnes and Lucy down to get some water. When they returned, mother measured the water and found that Lucy had brought much more than Agnes. Why was that? Oh, the answer is so simple you'll laugh at me when I tell you. *Lucy had a bigger pail!*

Why did I tell you this? Just listen! Two persons go to Holy Communion. Both receive the same Jesus; both please Him beyond expression by their coming. But one receives more grace than another, and sweeter consolations, and greater charity. Why? This answer is simple, too; but you won't laugh when I tell it, I'm sure. *The one made a bigger preparation than the other.*

Moral: Always make as good a preparation for Holy Communion as ever you can.

“What Have You Done to the Door?”

WHEN did it happen, and where? I do not know just when, but it really did happen. It was over forty years ago, and it took place right here in our own country. Let me tell you about it.

One day Father X was suddenly sent on an urgent sick call. It was in a missionary district, so the good priest took the Blessed Sacrament, mounted his horse, and started out at once. But the roads were unusually bad, and a dreadful storm was raging. Yet he pushed bravely on. Night came and found him still far from his destination. He was forced to put up at a wayside inn. The host and his household were infidels.

Now, while he was there a messenger arrived saying that the sick person was feeling much better, that there was no danger, and that he need not hurry. So, being all worn out by the hard ride, the priest resolved to stay there for the night. Reverently he placed the burse containing the Blessed Sacrament on the table and, having prayed before it, retired for a much-needed rest.

Refreshed and full of new energy, he arose early in the morning and took his departure. But imagine his confusion and dismay when, after having gone some distance, he found that he had forgotten the Blessed Sacrament! Jesus alone in the home of infidels! With all speed he raced back to the wayside inn, sorrow, self-reproach, anxiety filling his heart. Leaping from his horse, he quickly found the host and asked him whether anyone had been in the room he had occupied the night before.

“Oh, sir, what have you done to the door?” cried the innkeeper in an awed voice. “We cannot open it, though the key is in the lock from the outside. We cannot budge it an inch, no matter how hard we try. We took out the key and looked through the keyhole, and it seems you left a light in there.”

"Tell Us Another!"

Quickly the priest hastened up the stairs, followed by the whole family. At his first touch the door opened quietly. He entered. He fell upon his knees and gratefully adored the Blessed Sacrament. Then turning towards the household, who were infidels and knew nothing of God, he told them about the Eucharistic King Who had deigned to dwell beneath their roof and Who had even confirmed His presence by a miracle.

And what happened then? The whole assembled company, praising God, fell upon their knees and begged to be instructed in the Catholic religion. The priest accordingly remained a few days, instructing them and baptizing the converts.

And thus Jesus made captive some more seeking souls, binding them with the chains of His love—chains as soft as the petals of the rose.

The Little Patroness of First Communicants

THAT is what Blessed Imelda is. I wonder do you know why? Well, because her First Holy Communion, which was also her last, was so heavenly in every way.

This dear girlie lived in Bologna, Italy, about the year 1322. When she was still a mere child she was taken to a convent and brought up among the Dominican Sisters. In those days, you know, even tiny tots were taken to the convent, where they grew up like so many fragrant lilies. Yes; and this fair Italian maid was also given a little Dominican habit to wear. How cute she must have looked—only imagine! And she was just as sweet; Imelda, you remember, means, "Go, give honey!"

Now, there was one thing above all other things that Imelda longed for, and that was Holy Communion. But though at the time of this story she was already

The Little Patroness of First Communicants

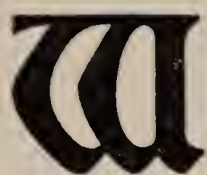
ten years old, she was not permitted to receive her Lord; for it was then the custom not to let young people go to Holy Communion as early as they do now. Oh, how little Imelda used to yearn for the Bread of Life! With what eager eyes she would watch the Sisters receive the Blessed Sacrament!

One day, when the Sisters had gone back to their places after receiving, it happened. What? The miracle! For suddenly a little Host was seen floating in the air just above the kneeling Imelda. And there it stayed suspended: Jesus wanted to give Himself to the loving girlie, you see. Quickly a priest was called. He came with a golden paten. The Host gently came down upon it. And he gave Holy Communion to the enraptured maiden. O the love that burned in her heart then! Her one great desire was granted her. For a long time she knelt motionless in an ecstasy of joy with a love-light from heaven on her fair young face—for so long a time, in fact, that some of the Sisters came up gently to speak to her.

Then they found that her first Communion had also been her last; for Jesus had taken her up to heaven to enjoy Him forever.

Imelda had fallen into the sleep of death.

Who Did It?



WE know that there is but one true God, as we profess in the first article of the Apostles' Creed where we say, "I believe in God, the Father almighty." But we know, too, that there are many false gods, some of which are called idols. These false gods are adored by pagans. Now, isn't it ridiculous that a man should, as we read in the Bible, take, for instance, a crooked piece of wood that is good for nothing and full of knots and should carve it diligently and make it look like a man or a beast and paint it and build a house for it and set it in the wall of the house and adore it? Then, too, in that same passage in the Book of Wisdom, it is said of this image that it is fastened with iron to the wall, "lest it should fall, knowing that it is unable to help itself; for it is an image and hath need of help." And this reminds me of a little story.

It happened in pagan Rome in the early days of Christianity. In those days a certain rich pagan named Maximus lived in a splendid palace. With him there lived a Christian boy called Claudius.

Now, Maximus was an idolater, a worshipper of idols, and in his palace he had a richly furnished room that was just full of false gods, of graven images, large and small, straight and crooked, fair and ugly. And the poor blind pagan worshipped them all. He thought they could help him!

But Claudius, the young Christian, thought quite differently. He would teach his master a lesson, no matter what the risk. He would open the old pagan's eyes!

So one day, taking a heavy sledge hammer, he entered the room where the false gods were sacredly kept and smashed them all into a thousand splinters—that is, all except one, the king of gods, Jupiter. This statue Claudius let stand in the middle of all the rubbish. And he placed the sledge hammer in its hands.

Who Did It?

Imagine, if you can, the awful fury of Maximus when he came to adore his gods and found them shattered and broken to pieces. "That Christian boy did it!" he roared. "I will sacrifice him to my gods!" And he at once sent his men to drag the lad to the scene.

Was Claudius frightened? Not a bit! And when the enraged pagan shouted, "Boy, did you do this shameful work?" he calmly answered:

"Why do you ask me? Do you not see the statue of the king of gods in the center there? Lo! he has a huge sledge hammer in his hands. I suppose he smashed your gods. It looks that way—and caught in the act at that!"

Claudius sure was a smart one—like most boys!

"You little rascal!" cried Maximus, "you did the work! Why, that statue could not even raise its arm, much less demolish my gods."

"Ah," said Claudius quietly, "if he cannot even raise his arm, why do you fall down in adoration before him and ask him to help you! These gods of yours are wood and stone. They cannot even help themselves. A mere boy is stronger than they. Behold, there is but one true God, the God Whom we Christians adore."

And the end of the story is this: The boy's little trick opened the pagan's eyes indeed. He renounced gods so false and helpless that a little lad could destroy them and became a good Christian, adoring only the one God in three divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The Christ-Child

ST. ANTHONY'S statue is just lovely, isn't it? And we find it in so many, many churches. Now, I wonder who can tell me why it is so *very* lovely? Why, because almost always the Infant Jesus is in his arms, or clinging round his neck, or patting his cheeks. Happy St. Anthony! One time, you see, someone peeped into his room on the sly—and saw the living Christ-Child thus caressing the dear saint. Wouldn't you like to hold Him in your arms, too? Of course! Well, you really do. He gives Himself to you, enters right into your heart even, every time you receive Holy Communion.

But whenever I see St. Anthony's statue I think of a beautiful story. There once lived a very holy man. His name was Blessed Boniface. And it happened, as it happens to us all, that he became very sick. You know how lonely we often get when we must lie in bed day after day in suffering. Blessed Boniface got lonely, too.

So one day he complained gently to the Blessed Virgin. Holy people, you know, realize that God is everywhere; and hence they speak familiarly to Him and His dear Mother and the saints whenever they like—and they *like* it often, just as we *ought* to like it often. "Dearest Mother," he said, "I'm so lonely here with nobody to visit me and keep me company."

And what do you think happened then? Oh, something wonderful! The gracious Virgin herself appeared to him, carrying her little Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes, in her arms. She went right up to the bed and placed her precious burden at the holy man's side. Then the Christ-Child, with His own tiny hands, pulled away the cloth that covered His face. And Blessed Boniface gazed upon the beauty of Jesus. Oh, what sweet company he had then! He was lonely no longer.

The Christ-Child

How beautiful was Jesus? Ah, I cannot tell you! Not even the tongues of angels could describe Him. As beautiful as heaven—no, more beautiful. So sweet and charming and fair to look upon was that Babe that Blessed Boniface cried out in rapture: “Oh, if in Paradise there were nothing else but that blessed face, it were worth while to suffer all tribulation, that we might gaze upon a countenance so glorious!”

Now, in the Sacred Host we see that same dear Jesus, only with the eyes of faith. And in Holy Communion He is not only placed at our side, but is given to us to hold for a while in closest embrace. So whenever you see the little Host in the priest’s hand and hear him utter those holy words, “Behold the Lamb of God!” you must say, “Dear Jesus, I believe that You are in Your Sacrament of Love; I believe it as firmly as if I really saw You with my own bodily eyes.”

Then one day you will see Him in heaven, as He actually is; and He will be “your reward exceeding great.”

The Christmas Cloak

JENNIE came home from school crying. It was only a few days before Christmas at that. Surely, no time for tears.

"What are you crying for, Jennie?" mother asked anxiously.

"Oh, mother, Marie has clothes so much nicer than mine," sobbed the girl.

"Now, Jennie, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" mother said, surprised. "Is that the way to be a good girl, thinking about nice clothes even when you are in church? Your clothing is neat and warm, and you always have enough. What more do you want? You must thank God for taking such good care of us. And don't forget that Marie's father is rich. He can afford to buy her more expensive garments. But you know father has to work hard every day to support us. While we have a comfortable home to live in and healthy food to eat, and warm clothes to wear we should be grateful to God—and bless Him for keeping father well and strong. Really, Jennie, it is very naughty for you to be dissatisfied."

Just then mother saw Elsie Prull walk down the street. "See," she said, "there's Elsie. What a poor, thin cloak she wears! She is just shivering from the cold. But it's the best she has; for she is poor and her mother has been sick for a long time. And you, who have everything you need, and more even, are crying out of envy. Jennie, do you think God likes that?"

Now, Jennie was really a good girl. So she saw at once how wrong it was for her to act in such a way. Then, too, there was Elsie—she pitied Elsie.

"Mother," she said suddenly, "I'm sorry I acted so thoughtlessly. I'm quite ashamed! And, mother—you know I have an extra cloak upstairs. It's warm and heavy and still good. Won't you let me give it to Elsie, please?"

The Christmas Cloak

How happy mother was to hear that! Now her darling was a darling indeed. "Of course, you may," she said. "Though we haven't much, we must not forget those who have even less."

At once Jennie hastened over to Elsie's home, a bundle under her arm. It was the cloak. Oh, how happy Elsie and her poor sick mother were! They were so happy that they cried.

That night Jennie had a dream. "Oh, mother," she cried the next morning, "what a lovely dream I had last night. I dreamt I saw the Christ-Child, just as He came to us the first Christmas night. Oh, He was so sweet and dear! He smiled upon me and stretched out His arms for me to come and kiss Him. And, mother—He had on my cloak—the one I gave to Elsie." Jennie's eyes were moist with emotion and her voice trembled.

"See, Jennie, thus Jesus rewards you. Thus He shows you that what you do for others in His name you do for Him."

A few days later Christmas came. Under her beautiful tree Jennie found an extra large box. What could it be? She opened it. "O mother," she cried, "see what the Christ-Child brought me! A cloak, just like the one I gave away, only all new! Oh, mother, it's just as though I gave it to Jesus, and He gave it back much nicer than before."

And in church that day, kneeling before the crib, Jennie whispered, "Dear Baby God, now I know that whenever we do anything for You, You do still more for us. I am going to do so much for you. I am going to try to make others as happy as You have made me."

A Bargain With the Devil



ONCE upon a time there lived a woman whose name was Niga—just Niga. Now, it happened that she was all alone in the world and very poor. Indeed, she was so forsaken by everybody that for a long time she had to wander about in solitary places, hungry, and thirsty, in heat and cold, in sunshine and rain. That was hard, of course; but we ought to be glad to endure even very hard things, if such be God's sweet will. And we can really become most patient in poverty and suffering if we remember that Jesus, Who is our divine Model, often had no place whereon to lay His head. But Niga never thought of the Savior in that light. She blamed God for everything. And, you know, we may not blame Him for anything.

Now, the devil knew that she blamed God. So one day he said to her, "I'll help you to live a more prosperous life, I'll better your condition and enable you to make much money, if only you agree to do one thing. All I want you to do is to conduct yourself in church as so many others do. Just look around all you can; don't pay any attention to what is going on at the altar; tell stories to those around you; annoy them all you can; tease them; ask them questions. The more you do these things in church and the less you pray the better I like it and the surer I'll be to help you."

And Niga—I'm so sorry to say it!—agreed to do her worst. And she succeeded marvelously. No one who was near her in church could ever attend Mass or other divine services devoutly. She would look around to attract attention and snicker and whisper and criticize and— Really, the devil must have taught her some new ways of misbehaving in church; she had so many.

But oh! God will not let Himself be mocked. Sooner

Serving Mass

or later He will show His power—and punish. In this case He did it in a striking manner. He sent a great thunderstorm. And one of His fiery thunderbolts fell into the very midst of the crowd where Niga was. There was a blinding flash and a deafening crash. Was anybody hurt! Nobody—except Niga. She was killed on the spot in a dreadful way: all burnt and twisted by the fearful lightning.

This is a true story. And sometimes when I see how some boys and girls and grown-up people behave in church I wish—well, I wish they would know it, as you do now.

Serving Mass

I WONDER have you ever heard of Blessed Thomas More, the celebrated Lord Chancellor of England, who died for conscience in the reign of Henry VIII, the “Royal Bluebeard.”

He was led out of the prison into which he had been unjustly cast on the morning of July 6, 1535, his face pale and lean, his eyes raised to heaven, carrying a little red cross. A good woman offered him a little wine to strengthen him. He refused it. “Christ in His Passion drank no wine,” he said, “but gall and vinegar.” When he reached the scaffold he was almost too weak to ascend. Said he to the Lieutenant, jokingly, “I pray you, sir, see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself.” He bandaged his own eyes. Then the blow of an axe—and that pure soul sped to its Maker.

This model man, who fought so joyfully in behalf of faith and justice and gave his life therefor, took great delight in serving Mass, even as Lord Chancellor of the British realm. One day a certain courtier, very deficient, as anyone can see, in lively faith, said to him, “Sir, the King will be much displeased to learn

"Tell Us Another!"

that you lower yourself to fulfill the office of a mere Mass server."

The answer Blessed Thomas gave was worthy of the man. "Surely," he replied, "the king cannot be displeased at the homage which I render to his King."

Yes; I know. Our altar boys are the best of lads—as a rule. But there are exceptions. There are those who show by their careless conduct at the altar that they little appreciate the high honor bestowed upon them. Many of these "Pages of the King of kings" might well go to Blessed Thomas More and—learn from him!

"God Put Them There for Us to Have!"

GOD put them there for us to have!" That is what Lily Stikman, an Alaskan girl, said. What did she mean? Ah! that's the story.

Lily lives at Nulato in Alaska. Last winter she, too, was out for the winter hunt and, though only fourteen years old, she brought back forty dollars worth of furs.

They traveled many, many miles—she and her brothers and sisters. At last they came to a little cabin, a nice little cabin, only it had no windows and was so cold! But the next day when they returned from setting traps they brought a window with them. They had found it in another deserted cabin. My! they had a cozy little hut for the winter hunt then. They were thankful.

But there was something else. Their provisions gave out and for two days they had nothing to eat. So Lily said to her sister Eva: "We must kneel down and pray God to help us." So they prayed.

Afterwards Lily went out of the cabin; and what did she see but five ptarmigans, a kind of grouse that lives in the north, on a nearby tree. She ran into the cabin, got the rifle—and "crack" went the gun five times and

"God Put Them There for Us to Have!"

each time a ptarmigan tumbled down. And then they had food. Soon after that their parents came bringing plenty provisions.

But Lily and her brothers and sisters did not forget to thank God fervently for having heard their prayer. Did He really hear it? Yes; for, as Lily says, "Those fowls never stay in that part of the country. And when I shot first the others did not fly away. They just stayed. I always believed in prayer, but now I believe more firmly still. I saw with my own eyes that God helps us when we ask Him. God put them there for us to have."

Other Books by Father Winfrid Herbst, S. D. S.

QUESTIONS OF CATHOLICS ANSWERED

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